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Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXVII, Issue No. 166

www.saipantribune.com | TUESDAY AUGUST 22, 2017 | www.facebook.com/saipantribune | 75¢

Vandals damage Kobler center again

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The administration of Gov. Ralph DLG Torres has temporarily shut down the Koblerville Youth Learning Center after it was vandalized again early Friday morning.

In a statement yesterday, Shelane Borja, the special assistant for Youth Affairs, said the center will be temporarily closed to all activity until further notice. "At this time, [the] Koblerville Youth Center will be undergoing construction to repair vandalism and to make necessary safety improvements," Borja said.

» Center closed temporarily for repair work

See VANDALS on Page 4

These two teenagers visit the Koblerville Youth Learning Center yesterday and feel sad that it's temporarily closed due to another vandalism that occurred early Friday morning.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Certified questions on salary hike now with high court

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Attorney General Edward Manibusan and Finance Secretary Larrisa Larson have jointly submitted certified questions with the CNMI Supreme Court over the issue of the salary increases that the Legislature had approved for some elected officials.

CNMI Supreme Court Associate Justice John A. Manglona accepted the certified questions on Friday.

The chief of the Office of the Attorney General Civil Division, Christopher M. Timmons, submitted the joint petition as counsel for Manibusan.

Manibusan

Larson

Lawyers Matthew T. Gregory and Kimberlyn King-Hinds signed the joint petition as counsels for Larson.

Manglona accepted the two following certified questions:

1. Did the presence of four sitting members of the Legislature on the advisory commission leading to the enactment of Public Law 19-83 violate Article II, Section II of the NMI Constitution? If so, did the illegal presence of the legislators on the advisory commission render the salaries for the governor, the lieutenant governor, and the Legislature in Public Law 19-83 unconstitutional?

2. Were the three salary increases (or any of them) for members of the

See CERTIFIED on Page 4

Opposition: Certified question a good option

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Those opposed to a salary increase for elected officials were relieved to learn yesterday that the Department of Finance is "voluntarily agreeing" to an injunction, effectively preventing it from implementing the increases.

Villagomez

House minority leader Rep. Edmund Villagomez (Ind-Saipan), who was one of those who opposed the increases authorized by Public Law 19-83, told *Saipan Tribune* that he is "more at ease" with his vote pertaining to the issue.

"We pledged to uphold all of the laws and the Constitution of the U.S. and the Commonwealth," Villagomez said, adding that when it came to questioning a law's constitutionality, there is a "process that needs to be followed."

Villagomez, along with House minority bloc members Reps. Edwin K. Propst (Ind-Saipan) and Vinson

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SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

Local

Celebrate 1st-class beauty with DFS event

By BEA CABRERA
bea_cabrera@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Professional make-up artist Gabby Mishikawa gives a make-up application demonstration to a customer. BEA CABRERA

There were demos by make-up artists from MAC, Dior, and Chanel.

Raffle prizes were given away to lucky customers.

Special promotions on beauty products were offered.

And all customers got free lemonade and cookies.

Welcome to the Lips, Lashes and Lemonade event of T Galleria, the fourth year that DFS Saipan celebrated its First Class Beauty campaign.

Held last Aug. 18 and 19, the event was intended to celebrate beauty and share it with the public and all travelers who visit Saipan, said Jamika Reyes Taijeron, promotions manager of DFS Group Ltd.

"There were two setups for the beauty demonstrations. One was in front of the store where we are focused on Dior and Chanel lip colors, considered the top brands for make-up, and another one in front of the MAC store, where we did lash and lip demonstrations," Taijeron said.

DFS Saipan started off with a model to begin the demonstration.

After that, people were called to a free sit-down demonstration and one-on-one treatment with a beauty advisor.

The First Class Beauty Campaign is ongoing for the whole month of August on Saipan and over 20 DFS and T Galleria by DFS stores worldwide.

According to Taijeron, the campaign hopes to bring together travelers and an array of special in-store First Class Beauty experiences and exclusive products.

"First Class Beauty is a global event that DFS has and the aim is to celebrate beauty in first-class style. So everything is elevated this month. All our special offers and services are given first-class treatment. We have both high-end and accessible price points."

"We target both women and men in this campaign. The biggest market are the women because of the make-up, skincare, and fragrance, but we also have many products for men. A lot of men are becoming conscious about their skin so there are a lot of skin products and fragrance for men," she added.

Since February this year, DFS Saipan has had its lowest price guaranteed promo where they showcase all price points, from opening level to luxury price points.

"Currently, we are having the lowest price guaranteed on select products. What that means is, for every brand, there are selected products where we guarantee the lowest price. If a customer finds a lower price than what we offer and show us proof, then we match the price," Taijeron said.

"Since we started, we've been getting good feedback from both locals and tourists. This gives our customers the best value," she added.

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Northern Marianas Humanities Council
Navigating the Human Experience

Call for Nominations
2017 Governor's Humanities Awards

The Northern Marianas Humanities Council is accepting nominations for the 2017 Governor's Humanities Awards.

This event, held annually in October as a part of CNMI Humanities Month, recognizes outstanding contributions to the humanities by individuals and organizations in the community.

Nominees should have a notable humanities achievement in the past year, as demonstrated in any of the following four categories:

- **Research and Publication in the Humanities;**
- **Preservation of Traditional Cultural Practices;**
- **Preservation of CNMI History; and**
- **Outstanding Humanities Teacher (in both classroom and non-classroom settings).**

A fifth category, **Lifetime Achievement**, recognizes significant contributions to the humanities over multiple decades. This award may be given posthumously.

Nomination forms and instructions are available at the Council's office in the Springs Plaza Building, Gualo Rai, or on the council website at www.northernmarianashumanities.org.

Nominations may be made by any member of the general public and **are due no later than 4:30 p.m. on Friday, 13 October 2017.**

Awards will be presented in a special ceremony in October (time, date and venue to be announced).

For more information, contact council staff at 235-4785

BEA CABRERA
E-Land Group president/CEO Matthew Wook Park and MINA executive director Roberta Guerrero are surrounded by MINA officers and volunteers during the emerald sponsorship donation to MINA's Green Gala event that will be held on Sept. 15, 2017, 6pm at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan.

E-Land gives $5K to MINA's Green Gala

By BEA CABRERA
bea_cabrera@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

E-Land Group has signed up as a sponsor of the Green Gala, which is set for Sept. 15 at Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan.

The Green Gala is a fundraising event of the Micronesia Islands Nature Alliance. This year marks over 10 years of the organization's existence.

E-Land's $5,000 sponsorship of the Green Gala makes it an emerald sponsor. According to E-Land Group president/CEO Matthew Wook Park, they want to help conserve the environment and Saipan's natural beauty.

"We are living on Saipan and we are doing business here. One of the things why we are here is because we fell in love with the natural beauty of Saipan. With that, I feel we need to help conserve and protect the environment," Park said.

This is not the first time that E-Land is supporting MINA's Green Gala. According to MINA executive director Roberta Guerrero, this kind of cooperation with E-Land gives the community the idea that everyone on the island is in this together.

"E-Land Group has always been a big supporter and, especially this year, they've seen a real challenge in keeping our beaches clean for our community and guests as well," said Guerrero.

"Our partnership with them…is really invaluable and the assistance that they are giving will allow us to continue managing our programs, not only our TASI rangers, but also our schools for environmental conservation," she added.

"This year, we have a great program for reforestation. There are so many beaches that still don't have trees after Soudelor so we are really hoping we can get some of that work done this year. With the participation of E-Land Group…that's really possible," Guerrero said.

In addition to lively entertainment, dinner, and beverages, the Green Gala will feature highlights from MINA's projects, a silent auction, and many other activities that promise a memorable evening to celebrate over 10 years of working with island communities for conservation. Proceeds would be used to fund MINA projects throughout the year.

MINA has worked to implement various conservation projects, including the Plastic Bag Challenge, the Schools for Environmental Conservation workshops, the Marine Debris Prevention program, Tasi Watch Program, the Adopt-A-Bin Project, and Managaha Pride Campaign.

The partnership between E-Land Group and MINA shows the community that the conservation and protection of the environment cannot be done by one entity.

"We are all in it together, not just for our community but for our visitors as well living in a sustainable environment so we can pass it on to our children and to our children's children," said Guerrero.

"We believe that MINA is doing a great job, that is why we continue to support their causes and activities," Park said.

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Bank of Guam installs 8th ATM in CNMI

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Bank of Guam recently installed an automated teller machine at the Joeten Dandan building, making it the bank's eighth ATM on island.

Bank of Guam vice president and branch manager Larry Philip confirmed that they took over the slot of the Bank of Hawaii ATM machine at Joeten Dandan a little over three weeks ago.

Philip said this was intended to better accommodate their clients. He said the building is a perfect centralized spot for their clients to make use of the ATM's services.

According to Philips, this is another way for Bank of Guam to give back to the community that they serve and a way of re-investing in the community.

The Bank of Hawaii ATM, which used to occupy the Joeten Dandan spot, will be relocated.

According to Bank of Hawaii vice president and branch manager Rose Sumor, the intent is to relocate the bank's ATM around the same area in Dandan but the new location has yet to be finalized.

VANDALS

From Page 1

The center, just a stone's throw from the Koblerville fire station, was built in 2005 with funding from the community development block grant.

Two male teens, who had gone to the center yesterday afternoon, assisted in cleaning up the broken glass from a shattered window.

The 17-year-old boy said he was upset upon learning that the center had been vandalized again as he would always go there to use the computer and play table tennis.

"It's not fair," he said.

The other teen, a 15-year-old boy, expressed sadness at not being able to visit the center until it re-opens.

"It's crazy," said the boy about the vandalism.

Torres expressed disappointment upon learning of the incident.

In a statement, Torres said the youth centers are not just important parts of the community, but the efforts of the staff are geared solely for the betterment of the youth and their advancement.

"It is difficult to understand the reasons behind this type of vandalism, but despite the reasons, it is important that our community join together and help maintain our centers," Torres said.

On behalf of the youth who use these centers, he said people must speak out against those who commit these acts.

Torres said vandalism causes unnecessary disruption to those who rely on these services, and disrupts the efforts of those in the community seeking to do good for one another.

Borja noted that in the past year, they have been able to rehabilitate and reopen the youth centers in Koblerville, Gualo Rai, and San Antonio.

A police substation was even installed at the Chalan Kanoa Youth Center in collaboration with the Department of Public Safety.

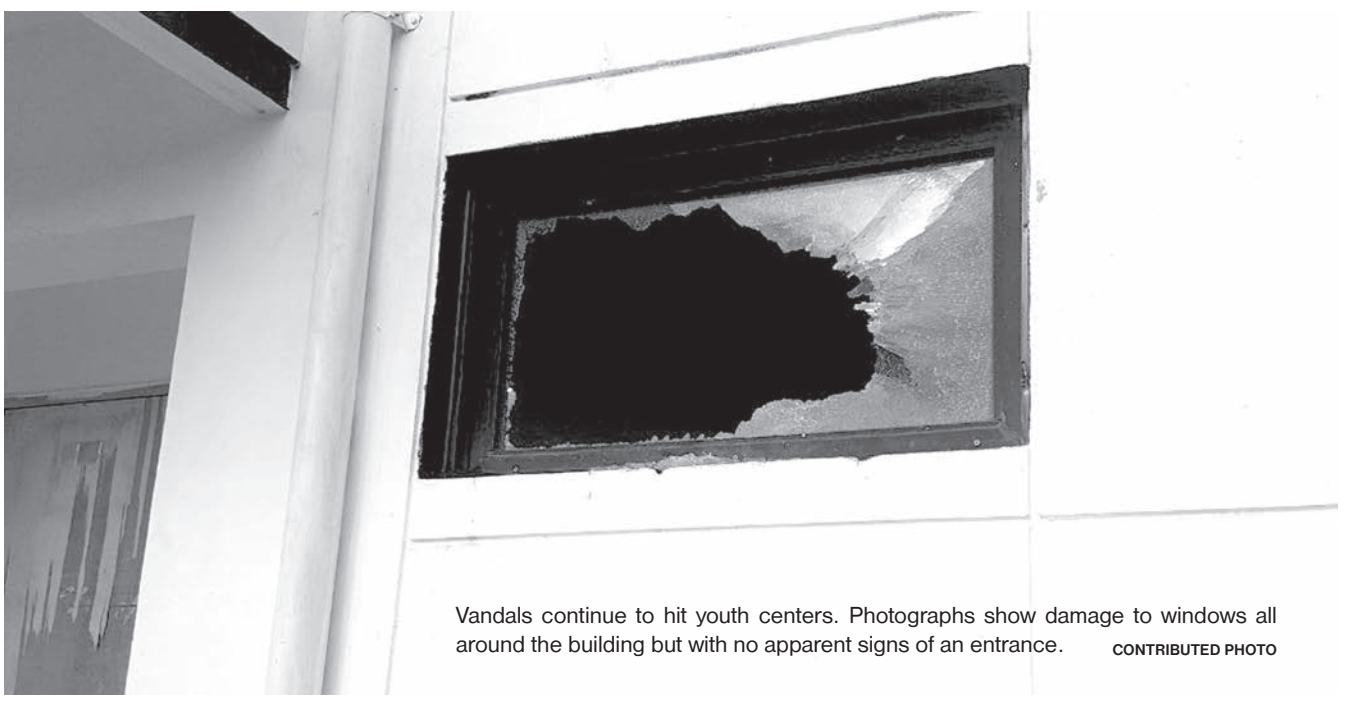
Borja said it is disheartening to wake up in the morning and find out that one or more of the centers have been damaged or broken into.

"Since our opening, we've been assisting more students to improve literacy rates and extracurricular activities, but these criminal actions have been hurting our operations," Borja said.

She said options are being explored to prevent future acts of vandalism. They are looking into acquiring surveillance cameras to curb this activity, but that it is quite costly, she said.

"We just want to remind our community that these centers are for our collective benefit, and they offer our families the ability to learn skills and engage with one another," she said.

Last June, three male teenagers allegedly vandalized the center and fled to the jungle behind the building.



Vandals continue to hit youth centers. Photographs show damage to windows all around the building but with no apparent signs of an entrance. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CERTIFIED

From Page 1

Legislature unconstitutional because they exceeded the change in an accepted price index for the period since the last change, (or in the case of P.L. 4-32, was not based upon a price index at all); or alternatively, were the three salary increases (or any of them) unconstitutional because they exceeded the respective advisory commission's salary recommendation?

In June, Superior Court Presiding Judge Roberto C. Naraja ruled that Manibusan has legal authority to sue Larson over the salary increases.

In November 2016, the Legislature passed Public Law 19-83, which instituted pay raises for civil service government employees, the governor, lieutenant governor, and members of the Legislature.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres did not sign the legislation into law. Neither did he exercise his veto power. Instead, he allowed P.L.19-83 to lapse into law.

Naraja said Larson has a stake in this litigation by virtue of her role as the head of Finance.

Last Feb. 9, Manibusan filed the lawsuit against Larson, claiming that she should be stopped from implementing the pay raises provided in P.L. 19-83.

OPPOSITION

From Page 1

Sablan (Ind-Saipan), opposed the fiscal year 2018 budget, due to the provision for a salary increase.

Finance Secretary Larissa Larson and Attorney General Edward Manibusan have submitted two certified questions with the Supreme Court relating to the increase. A briefing on the matter is scheduled in September.

"It's good to see something like this so we could get a clarification," Villagomez said. "We have a three-branch government for the checks and balances and that's when [it] comes to play, when the [Judiciary] interprets the law."

Propst referred to the injunction as a "step in the right direction." He said in a message that the best way to go was to eliminate the salary increases altogether.

"All it would take is for the leadership to take action on my House Bill 20-39, which aims to eliminate the salary increases [totaling] to…$1.2 million in additional needed revenue every single year for 35 elected officials," said Propst.

Propst also proposed a floor amendment to the fiscal year 2018 budget, which reappropriates $1,018,772 that is supposed to go to the salary increases to the Department of Public Safety. The amendment was ultimately defeated during voting in late July 2017.

House Ways and Means Committee chair Rep. Angel Demapan (R-Saipan) had no comments on the injunction, but said the certified question joint petition route would "bring some finality to the issue."

He reiterated previous statements he made that stood by P.L. 19-83. "There is an existing law and we budgeted according to the existing law," he said, adding that the certified question route is a good one for clarity.

"When the Supreme Court rules out its response to the question, it would at least give us guidelines to approach the issue, whether it is constitutional or not. At this point, everything is in limbo until we get a response from the court."

Hofschneider, Sablan, and House Speaker Ralph Demapan (R-Saipan), the author of the bill that eventually became P.L. 19-83, were not available when *Saipan Tribune* attempted to interview them.

Yesterday's Senate Fiscal Affairs Committee meeting was cancelled; no Senate reactions were obtained.

What now?

According to Demapan, the Legislature has three options.

One is to push through with the appropriations but "just not pay it out" until a decision from the Supreme Court is finalized.

"We do not know if the response is going to come before or after [the end of fiscal year 2017]," said Demapan, adding that if the Supreme Court finds that P.L. 19-83 is unconstitutional, the funds could be re-appropriated to "other programs."

"If the court rules that the law is constitutional, then the [Finance] secretary already has the funds appropriated to pay it out," he said.

The third option, Demapan said, is just to already re-appropriate the money intended for the salary increases without waiting for the Supreme Court ruling; however, the problem with this option is if the ruling says that the increases are constitutional.

"[This] would mean the Legislature would now have to identify new funding sources [for the salary increases]," he said, adding that the fiscal year 2018 budget is now with the Senate and is still under review by the Senate Fiscal Affairs Committee.

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Ex-convict allegedly burglarized House lawyer's home

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A day before his sentencing in a criminal case, an ex-convict was arrested in As Lito yesterday morning after a surveillance camera led to his identification in connection with the burglary at the home of House of Representatives lawyer Joseph Taijeron in Garapan.

Police said that Benjamin Bok Lee, 27, confessed to the crime and stated he sold some of the stolen items and played poker.

Lee is the same person accused of assaulting his wife and her male friend at the entrance of Coral Ocean Point in Koblerville. The charges in that case were dropped last week; the prosecution may refile the case in the future.

In the latest case, Lee was taken before Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho yesterday afternoon on charges of burglary and theft. Bail was set at $15,000 cash; preliminary hearing will be on Aug. 29. Lee is represented in the case by assistant public defender Cindy Nesbit.

According to police, an officer responded to a report of a burglary and theft incident at the home of Taijeron in Garapan last Aug. 2 at night.

The officer learned from Taijeron's wife that a purse she had just put on the table in the home's dining area was gone and the front sliding door was wide open. She immediately called her husband.

The purse contained another purse, a wallet, a bank card, cellphone, car keys, safety deposit keys, house keys, office keys, two passports, and other small items. The total worth of the stolen items was $3,000.

She checked the surveillance camera of a neighbor that captured the suspect's car and she posted the car's photo on her Facebook account. That led to Lee's identification.

Taijeron also remembered that a day or two prior to the burglary, Lee approached him at his house and told him he lived in that same house a while back. Lee then left.

Taijeron said he was somehow confused with Lee's statement as the house used to be a business establishment.

In an interview with Lee at the Department of Public Safety last Aug. 4, he allegedly confessed to stealing the purse, that he was driving south when he passed the Taijeron couple's house and saw through the sliding door and the blinds a purse on the table.

Lee said he turned around, parked the car, and went inside the house, and took the purse from the table. Lee said he then drove north, dumped some of the items from the purse into a swamp in Chalan Lau Lau, then played poker in San Jose.

Lee said he proceeded to another poker arcade in Chalan Kanoa, where he sold the purse to a woman for $40. He later went to another poker arcade in San Antonio, where he sold the stolen cellphone for $30.

Lee's sentencing in a robbery case will be today, Tuesday, before Superior Court Associate Judge Kenneth L. Govendo. In that robbery, a teenager was injured after he was dragged 50 feet away by Lee's car.

In the case against Lee that was dropped last week, he allegedly committed the crimes of assault and battery and two counts of disturbing the peace.

Seafood galore at Cajun Sea-Fest

By BEA CABRERA
bea_cabrera@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Tuesdays and Thursdays are special days at Aqua Resort Club Saipan. That's when the hotel resort holds its Cajun Sea-Fest—a feast of the best and freshest seafood cooked Cajun style.

Customers get to choose which seafood combo bag they want. The bag's contents can range from the Shrimp Combo Bag, which is good for two for only $65, to the Deluxe Lobster Combo Bag, which is good for two for only $95. In between is the Crab Combo Bag, which is good for two for only $80.

Each Combo Bag is served with a trio of sauces: Creole tomato sauce, finadene, and melted butter.

For side dishes, order their basket of Cajun seasoned fries, bowl of coleslaw, and snow crab cluster. Extra orders of scrumptious seafood like jumbo tiger prawns and whole Maine red lobster are also available.

After the combo choice is steamed in a bag of mouthwatering Cajun spices, it is shaken up and poured onto the table that is covered in plastic. Customers each get a bib and are let loose on the pile of food.

Each order comes with a choice of either a bucket of ice-cold Bud family beer or a pitcher of specialty soft drinks such as classic lemonade, blue lemonade, pink lemonade, or sweet southern tea. If you are still thirsty, an additional bucket of beer is only $16, while an additional pitcher of softdrink is only $8.

Children (ages 5-10) can also get their own combo called the Fish & Chips basket that has breaded *mahi mahi* served with Cajun seasoned French fries. This comes with a mason jar of lemonade and vanilla ice cream in a waffle bowl topped with yummy caramel sauce for only $16.

Apple turnovers topped with vanilla ice cream caps off this delicious feast.

The Aqua Resort Club Saipan Cajun Sea-Fest is available on Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 6pm onwards. For inquiries and reservations, call (670) 322-1234 ext. 731/732.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9910(a), the Fifteenth CNMI State Board of Education hereby gives notice that there will be a Special Board Meeting on Wednesday, August 23, 2017 at 9:00 a.m. at the Library, Tinian High School

AGENDA[1]

I. Preliminary
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Adoption of Minutes
   a. July 6, 2017 Special Board Meeting
   b. July 20, 2017 Special Board Meeting

II. Public Comments[2]

III. Reports
1. Chair
2. Board Committees
   a. CIP
   b. FPA
   c. ISA
   d. LIA
   e. SICPP
   f. SARC
3. Commissioner of Education
   a. Financial Status Reports
      i. Federal
      ii. Local
   b. Head Start Program
   c. Others

IV. Unfinished Business

V. New Business
1. Student Assessment for School Year 2016-2017
2. Child Nutrition Program Revised Proposed Charge Policy
3. Head Start Program
   a. Carry Over Request 09CH9165-04-01
   b. Transportation Waiver
   c. Program Information Report
   d. Head Start/Early Head Start Organizational Chart
4. Retirement Outstanding Contribution
5. SY 17-18 Interscholastic Athletic Department
6. Certification and Licensure Matters
   a. CLO Report 2017-009
   b. CLO Report 2017-010
   c. Fingerprinting

VI. Executive Session[3]
1. Legal Updates
2. Personnel/Certification
3. Other matters

VII. Discussion of Agenda for next Board meeting

VIII. Adjournment

[1] In the event that the items on the agenda are not completed, the meeting will recess and reconvene on the following day or at the most expeditious date and time determined by the Board.
[2] Pursuant to BOE Policy 0415, public comments are limited to 30 minutes. We ask that remarks be limited to 3 minutes each. Everyone is welcomed to submit written comments.
[3] Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9912, the Board may vote to meet in executive session at any time.

MARIANAS PUBLIC LAND TRUST

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR FINANCIAL AND COMPLIANCE AUDITS FOR FY 2017 AND 2018

MPLT RFP 17-01

The Marianas Public Land Trust (MPLT) is soliciting Request for Proposal (RFP) for Financial and Compliance Audit for MPLT for fiscal years 2017 and 2018. Copy of the RFP is available @ www.mplt.gov.mp or may be pick-up at MPLT, 1222 Capital Hill Road, Saipan, MP 96950.
Office Hours: 8:00am – 5:00pm, Monday – Friday

Contact Barbara Reyes at (670) 322-4401/4402 or email: mplt@mplt.gov.mp for more information.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION:
4:00 P.M., Tuesday, September 05, 2017

PLACE:
Marianas Public Land Trust
P.O. Box 501089
1222 Capital Hill Road
Saipan, MP 96950

The MPLT reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to waive any imperfections in a proposal if doing so is in the Trust best interest. All proposals shall become the property of MPLT.

Board of Trustees
Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
1 Lower Navy Hill Road Navy Hill, Saipan, MP 96950

Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9911, the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation hereby gives notice that a Special meeting of the Board of Trustees will be held on Wednesday, August 23, 2017 at 12:00 p.m. in the CEO's Conference Room 3 located at the Administrative offices (new wing).

CHCC Boards of Trustees Special Meeting
August 23, 2017 12:00 pm

AGENDA

I. Call to order
II. Determinations of Quorum
III. Review and Adoption of the Agenda
IV. Executive Session
   A. PHI Pharmacy Contract – PL 8-41 Section 13 (2)
V. Adjournment

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB17-COTA/FTA-205

SUBMISSION: SEPTEMBER 13, 2017 TIME: 11:00 A.M.

"PURCHASE OF ONE (1) MEDIUM-DUTY LOW FLOOR ADA ACCESSIBLE TRANSIT BUS FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OFFICE OF TRANSIT AUTHORITY"

THE SPECIFICATIONS FOR THIS PROJECT WILL BE AVAILABLE ON OR AFTER **AUGUST 22, 2017** AT COTA, OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL ASSISTANT FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION, 2ND FLOOR SUITE MARIANAS BUSINESS PLAZA, NAURU LOOP, SUSUPE, SAIPAN.

THIS IS A FEDERALLY FUNDED PROJECT; BIDDERS ARE REQUIRED TO COMPLY WITH FTA FEDERAL CONTRACT CLAUSES AS APPLICABLE.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES AND KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE GOVERNMENT.

/S/ ALFREDA P. CAMACHO
SPECIAL ASSISTANT FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

Office of the Public Auditor

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
RFP17-OPA-01

SUBMISSION/OPENING DATE: August 23, 2017 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"SINGLE AUDIT OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2017"

THE AUDIT GUIDELINES AND SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE, LOCATED AT 1236 YAP DRIVE, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS (MONDAY – FRIDAY, 7:30 AM – 4:30 PM, CLOSED ON HOLIDAYS).

INQUIRIES MAY BE DIRECTED TO MR. DAVID BLAKE, OPA AUDIT MANAGER, AT TELEPHONE NUMBERS (670) 322-6481/2 OR BY FACSIMILE TO (670) 322-7812.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI OPA PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC § 130-30-725 AND § 130-30-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES AND KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC AUDITOR (OPA) RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL PROPOSALS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE OPA. ALL PROPOSALS RECEIVED SHALL BECOME THE PROPERTY OF THE OPA AND WILL NOT BE RETURNED TO THE PROPOSERS.

/s/ MICHAEL PAI, CPA
PUBLIC AUDITOR/MANAGER

/s/ CHRISTIAAN WALLACE
PROCUREMENT OFFICER/OFFICE MANAGER

Tinian staff completes grant-writing training

An employee of the Tinian Mayor's Office recently completed a weeklong grantsmanship training in Honolulu, Hawaii, that lasted from July 16 to July 21, 2017.

Alexis Hofschneider had previously written grants for the Tinian Mayor's Office, but the training program offered her more insight into the grant-writing process.

"The program not only reinforced my writing skills, but, more importantly, it introduced strategies for successful program planning. The Grantsmanship Center also provided the class with useful materials to bring home and use as we prepare more proposals," Hofschneider said.

The training, hosted by The Grantsmanship Center, covered the basics of grant proposal writing and program planning. Attendees also had the opportunity to draft their own grants, review others' proposals, and seek out funding sources.

"I first learned how to write a grant through my own research, so it was nice to receive formal training," Hofschneider said. "The group setting was also helpful. My classmates' experience with grant proposals ranged from novice to expert, so I got to work with and receive feedback from classmates who were seasoned grant writers."

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Alexis Hofschneider, center, poses with her classmates and instructor at the Grantsmanship Training Program in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Tinian and Aguiguan Mayor Joey Patrick San Nicolas saw the training program as an opportunity to invest in his staff and community.

"Tinian is unique in its economic challenges, especially in today's climate. To build and stabilize our economy, we must diversify our funding sources and seeking grants is one way of doing so. It's important that our staff learn how to prepare grants so that our programs are properly funded and community needs are met," he said.

The Grantsmanship Center, based in Los Angeles, California, has been supporting grant-seeking efforts for over 40 years. The center holds workshops several times a year at various locations around the country. Topics include grant writing, preparing federal grants, and grants management.

San Nicolas hopes to send more staff to The Grantsmanship Center's workshops and expand the Tinian Mayor's Office's grant-seeking capabilities. ***(PR)***

Dela Cruz publishes second novel

In Jose S. Dela Cruz's new novel, *Lorenzo's Mind* (published by Archway Publishing), a personal injury attorney named Lorenzo fears he is losing his mind.

Lorenzo, 62, is plagued by recurring nightmares, so he embarks on a journey of self-discovery to understand why. When he learns he is suffering the effects of litigating a major case, Lorenzo fears he is having a mental breakdown, decides to shun his perfectionism and take a new, more relaxed approach to life.

"I would like readers of my book to be more aware and sensitive to mental health issues and the people who suffer from these illnesses. I also want people to understand that mental problems and diseases need to be diagnosed and treated just like the bodily illnesses and injuries that are treated as a matter of course," Dela Cruz says. "As the world becomes more and more technological and technical, our brain is called upon to work harder and harder, causing it to break down every now and then. For many, suicide becomes the ultimate mental breakdown."

Dela Cruz grew up in the Northern Mariana Islands. He graduated from the University of California, Berkeley, Law School, served as a trial judge, and later as chief justice of the Northern Marianas Supreme Court. He and his wife, Rita, have three children and three grandchildren, and reside on Saipan. This is his second book, *From Colonialism to Self-Government: The Northern Marianas Experience* being his first. ***(PR)***

RESIDENTIAL, GOVERNMENT & BUSINESS
DISCONNECTION NOTICE

IT&E would like to remind its **RESIDENTIAL, GOVERNMENT & BUSINESS** customers that current billing of accounts are due on or before **Tuesday, August 22, 2017**. Payments not received by close of business on **Aug. 22** will result in temporary suspension of all telephone services after 6:00PM on that day.

To prevent temporary suspension, customers are hereby advised to kindly pay their bills on or before **Tuesday, August 22, 2017**. Disputed billings must be brought to IT&E's attention in person or in writing by **Tuesday, August 22, 2017.** Customers must pay any current amount due, to avoid disconnection.

If you have questions regarding billing or services please call Customer Service at 682-4ITE (4483) or visit our Customer Service or Business Sales Center – Middle Rd., Gulao Rai office.

IT&E Life In Motion

To avoid disconnection you may pay your IT&E bill at any location below:
SHELL Service Stations – up to 4:00pm
Chalan Laulau – up to 5:00pm
Tinian/Rota Office - up to 4:30pm
TSL Plaza – up to 6:00pm
Online payment – up to 9:00pm

PAY BY PHONE: 682-4ITE (4483)

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Office of the Secretary of Public Works
2nd floor-Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan, MP 96950

INVITATION FOR BIDS
DPW-17-IFB-025

PROPOSED MAYOR'S OFFICE PERIMETER FENCE, ROTA

Governor Ralph DLg. Torres and Lt. Governor Victor B. Hocog, through the Department of Public Works (DPW) are soliciting sealed bids for the **Proposed Mayor's Office Perimeter Fence, ROTA** Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

The project package will be available on or after **August 15, 2017** at Technical Services Division, Department of Public Works, located on Second Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, San Jose, Saipan. A non-refundable payment of **One Hundred Dollars ($100.00)** is required for each set. Payment must be made to the CNMI Teasurer and a receipt of payment must be presented when obtaining the Scope of Work at the DPW Technical Services Division.

All interested bidders are also required to include Insurer Clearance Certification (ICC) in their bid packages in order to bid on this project. The ICC can be obtained at the Department of Commerce/Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC) on Capitol Hill.

Bidding procedures shall be in full compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations currently in effect."

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITUES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

There will be a **Pre-bid Conference** for this project on **August 31, 2017**, 10:00 a.m. local time at **Rota Mayor Office, Rota.** The Prospective bidders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the site. All questions regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 p.m. local time on **September 8, 2017** to **Mr. Anthony A. Camacho, Director of Technical Services Division,** 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan or fax to (670) 234-3547. Response to questions shall be shared with prospective bidders.

Prospective bidders should examine and review the invitation for bids with care. If it should appear to a prospective bidder that the performance of the work under the contract or any of the matters relative thereto is not sufficiently described or explained in the invitation for bids, or that any discrepancy exists between different parts of the invitation for bids, or that full intent of the invitation for bids is not clear, then the prospective bidder shall submit a written request for clarification no later than ten (10) working days before the scheduled bid opening at 4:30 pm to **Mr. Anthony A. Camacho, Director of Technical Services Division**, 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan or fax to (670) 234-3547.

The prospective bidder shall examine carefully the site of the proposed work and the invitation for bids before submitting a bid.

The Contracting Officer (CO) may, upon recommendation of the Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR), issue an addendum notifying all prospective bidders known to have received an invitation for bids, or if issued after the deadline for submission of the notice of intention to bid, to those persons who submitted such notice, of any changes to the invitation for bids. The Department of Public Works will make every reasonable attempt to notify all persons who obtained the invitation for bids from the Technical Services Division by telephone to pick up the addendum or if the CO chooses, the addendum may be mailed or delivered personally or by facsimile machine. If the bid proposal requires the acknowledgment of addenda, the prospective bidder shall indicate the date of each addendum in the space provided. **It shall be the prospective bidder's responsibility to confirm the existence of any addendum by telephoning the COTR at (670) 234-9828/9838 no later than ten (10) Calendar days before the scheduled bid opening.**

Sealed bids must be marked **"DPW-17-IFB-025"**. For bidders within the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply, located at the former Emergency Management Office, Ascencion Drive, Building No. 1301, Capitol Hill, Saipan, no later than 10:00 a.m. local time September 13, 2017. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional Seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to bid. Notices of Intent to bid must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than **10:00 a.m. local time, September 13, 2017,** and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to procurement@pticom.com. For bidders located outside the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than **September 13, 2017** and the BID documents must be received at the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than **September 22, 2017.** Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

Bids will be publicly opened and read at the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply, located at the former Emergency Management Office, Ascencion Drive, Building No. 1301, Capitol Hill, Saipan, at **10:00 a.m. local time, September 27, 2017.** However, if no notices of intent to bid were received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be opened at **10:30 a.m. local time, on September 13, 2017.**

For bids greater than Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars **($25,000.00)** a bid security of fifteen (15%) of the bid amount must accompany the bid. **Bid security shall be on a bid bond, in cash, by certified check, cashiers check or other form acceptable to the government. A surety company shall hold the certificate of authority from the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. Surety requiring approval of the Attorney General must be pre-approved prior to bid submission.** Checks must be made payable to the CNMI Treasurer, with the name of the bidder and a notation on the face of the check: "Credit Account No. 44660". If a bid bond is submitted it must be accompanied by an Insurer Clearance Certification (ICC).

The bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be subject to a responsibility determination in conformance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations **§70-30.3-245.** The responsible bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be awarded a contract with the CNMI Government and will be required to deliver Performance and Payment bonds, each equal to 100% of the contract price for contracts greater than $25,000.00. Prior to the execution of the contract, the selected contractor shall submit:

a) A current license from the bonding company showing that it has authority to issue bond in the CNMI, and
b) A certification from the bonding company that the unencumbered value of its assets (exclusive of all outstanding commitments on other bond obligations) exceed the penal amount of each bond.

A contractor submitting an unacceptable payment or performance bond may be permitted a reasonable time, as determined by the P&S Director, to substitute an acceptable bond prior to executing a contract.

Acceptable assets are only:

1) Cash
2) US Gov't Securities
3) Stocks and Bonds traded on US Security Exchange
4) Real Property owned in fee simple in US; and
5) Irrevocable Letters of Credit

Performance time for completion of this project is **One Hundred Eighty (180) calendar days** upon issuance of Notice to Proceed. Liquidated damages for delays beyond the established completion date will be assessed at the rate of **Three Hundred (US$300.00)** for each and every day the work is delayed beyond the established completion date.

All bid documents received shall become the sole property of the CNMI Government. The Government reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive any imperfection in a bid proposal that does not affect the elements of price, quantity, and delivery of the bid, in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

JAMES A. ADA
Secretary of Public Works

HERMAN S. SABLAN
Director of Procurement & Supply

MVA, NMC ready tour guide certification classes

The Marianas Visitors Authority and Northern Marianas College executed a memorandum of understanding on Aug. 11, 2017, to formalize classes for the MVA's tour guide certification program.

Classes are tentatively slated to begin in October 2017, once regulations governing the program are formally adopted.

"We're enthusiastic to be moving forward with NMC on the scheduling of classes for the tour guide certification program," said MVA managing director Christopher A. Concepcion. "The college has a full complement of excellent instructors who we are confident will help raise the caliber of tour guides in the Marianas and, in doing so, help build upon our reputation as a premiere destination."

The 20 hours of class instruction will be held Monday through Friday beginning at 5pm and will include: CNMI history, CNMI geography, CNMI rules and regulations, principles of tour guiding/ tour operations, tour guide customer service, tour guide safety and security, protecting the environment, and CNMI culture and legends.

Instructors include historian Scott Russell, NMC Social Sciences and Fine Arts Department chair Thomas D. Sharts (M.Ed.), NMC Criminal Justice program coordinator Zerlyn Taimanao, NMC Distance Learning coordinator and local business owner William Hunter, NMC business instructor Bobbie Hunter, NMC Nursing Department chair Rose Tudela RN and instructor Johnny Aldan RN, NMC Natural Resource Program coordinator Alfred De Torres, and indigenous culture expert Peter Muna.

Tour guides will be required to complete the training course and pass a written test to receive certification. As proposed under draft regulations, individual tour guides will also be required to provide police and traffic clearance. The application fee for individual tour guides is $50, and tour guides will be required to display their badges when conducting tours. The certification would be valid for three years unless revoked or suspended, but the badge would need to be renewed every year.

Tour operators and tourist land/sea transport operators would be required to provide: 1) proof that the applicants maintain an office within the CNMI, 2) a certification that the applicant does not employ any tour guides that are not certified pursuant to the regulations, 3) proof that the applicant maintains a bank account in the CNMI under the business' name, 4) the applicant's business license, 5) the name of an employee or a retained independent contractor who is fluent in the English language, and 6) proof that the applicant is a member in good standing with the MVA.

The fee for a tour operator's application is $100.

Concepcion also noted that the program will support regulatory agencies in meeting their enforcement requirements.

"There are a number of laws and regulations already on the books that, if enforced, would be beneficial for tourism and the community. The tour guide certification program will educate tour guides on many of those statutes, which should help enforcement agencies as they continue to ensure both residents and tourists follow Commonwealth laws and regulations," said Concepcion. "The MVA will announce the formal launch of the program and the availability of applications once the regulations are finalized in September, and we encourage tour guides, tour operators, and tourist land/sea transport operators to begin compiling the required documents now."

Violations may result in monetary sanctions, revocation of a certification and/or business license, refusal to issue or renew a certification, or equitable sanctions. Under the current law, the MVA and other government agencies are responsible for enforcement. The MVA will also allow its security guards stationed at major tourist sites to act as enforcement officials.

For more information, contact MVA tour guide certification manager Kuen-Hee Han at khan@mymarianas.com or 664-3200. ***(MVA)***

Soroptimist Int'l installs new officers

The local chapter of Soroptimist International has elected a new set of club officers for 2017 to 2018, led by Marilyn Marron as president for 2018.

The new club officers were installed and inducted last Thursday at the Hyatt Regency Saipan. The new officers are Maureen Sebangiol, who is president for 2017; Bobbi Grizzard, secretary; Pam Brown-Blackburn, Ways & Means chair; Tania David, treasurer-elect; Marron, president-elect; and Emma Perez, treasurer

Soroptimist International is a 96-year-old organization whose primary mission and goal is: Improving the lives of women and girls through programs leading to social and economic empowerment."

According to Sebangiol, the club's CNMI chapter will be the host to a district meeting at the end of October, with members of sister clubs coming from California, Hawaii, and Guam joining CNMI members on Saipan. ***(PR)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The new officers of Soroptimist International NMI Chapter are, from left, Maureen Sebangiol, president; Bobbi Grizzard, secretary; Pam Brown- Blackburn, Ways & Means chair; and Tania David, treasurer-elect. Not in picture are Marilyn Marron, president-elect, and Emma Perez, treasurer.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The new officers pose with newly inducted members. From left, Maureen Sebangiol, Tania David, Kaye Tenorio, Karen Davis, Pam Brown-Blackburn, and Bobbi Grizzard.

Sept. 1 deadline to nominate Bridge of Light awardee

The deadline to submit nominations for the 2017 Bridge of Light Award has been extended to 5pm on Friday, Sept. 1, 2017.

The Bridge of Light Award is given each year by the Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence to honor the accomplishments and sacrifices of one extraordinary individual. An individual NMCADSV wishes to recognize for their work to provide safety for the community, end domestic violence and sexual assault, and to be a "Bridge of Light" for victims and survivors in the CNMI.

Nominations may be submitted by a member, representative, and/or volunteer of NMCADSV and/or the Family Violence Task Force; a victim or survivor; or an employee, representative, and/or volunteer at eligible CNMI agencies, organizations, or offices. To verify if an agency, organization, or office is eligible to nominate, contact NMCADSV at (670) 234-3878 or email Angelyn N. Palacios at angelyn@endviolencenmi.org.

Moreover, the nominee may be a service provider, representative, or volunteer at one or more eligible agencies, organizations or offices in the CNMI, and who has been there for a minimum of one year. The nominee must also show dedication and effort in the areas of leadership, service, advocacy for victims, prevention, community education or mobilization, and resource development.

Nominations may be submitted online through https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MND6K5H. Nomination forms are also available for pick-up and submission at the NMCADSV Office in Springs Plaza in Gualo Rai next to New XO Market, or may be emailed upon request through angelyn@endviolencenmi.org. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday, from 9am to 3pm.

Note that nominees will be considered for the Bridge of Light Award based only on information reflected on the completed nomination form. Those who would like to nominate individuals for the Bridge of Light Award are strongly encouraged to submit detailed and thorough nominations.

The recipient of the Bridge of Light Award will be announced during the upcoming Domestic Violence Awareness Month proclamation signing in October.

Past awardees include Department of Public Safety officer Flora Aguon, Karidat Social Services executive director Lauri B. Ogumoro, Division of Youth Services social worker Mildred W. Sikebert, and Karidat Social Services counselor Elaine C. Dela Cruz.

For additional information or inquiries, contact the Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence at (670) 234-3878. ***(PR)***

Parade of Cultures starts on Sept. 2

The Parade of Cultures returns on Sept. 2, marking the first night of the Marianas' Visitors Authority's 3rd Annual International Festival of Cultures.

The parade, featuring walking groups showcasing their traditional attire from the Pacific and Asia, will begin at 5pm at American Memorial Park and proceed south on Beach Road to the festival grounds at Garapan Fishing Base.

The International Festival of Cultures celebrates the ethnic diversity of the Marianas and will be held every Saturday evening in September beginning on Sept. 2, 2017.

The festival will feature ethnic food, dances, ethnic attires, games, crafts, cultural demonstrations and more.

"The Parade of Cultures is not a long or loud parade, but it is very colorful and vibrant, with our various cultures in the Marianas showing their cultural pride and many fine details of how different cultures adorn themselves," said MVA Community Projects manager Martin Duenas. "We invite all the community to come out and enjoy the parade and join in the welcoming performances for the event and then take time to learn about the various participating cultures during the festival."

This year's festival will feature a new time of 5pm to 9pm. On Sept. 2, parade participants are reminded to assemble at American Memorial Park at 4:30pm.

Slated to participate in the festival are the communities of Korea, China, Japan, Chamorro, Carolinian, Samoa, Fiji, Tonga, Hawaii, Marshall Islands, Palau, Bangladesh, and the Philippines.

For more information, contact MVA Community Projects coordinator Janerlinse Seman Sablan at jsablan@mymarianas.com or 664-3210 for more information. ***(MVA)***

MVA

The Bangladesh community participates in the Parade of Cultures in 2014 during the International Festival of Cultures. This year's Parade of Cultures will be held on Sept. 2, 2017, in downtown Garapan, Saipan to kick off the 3rd International Festival of Cultures every Saturday night in September.

Shelton appointed to lead UOG Center for Island Sustainability

Shelton

The University of Guam has appointed Dr. Austin Shelton as executive director of the Center for Island Sustainability.

Shelton is a graduate of Hawaii Pacific University where he earned his bachelor's degree in Marine Biology. He also has a master's and a doctorate in zoology from the University of Hawaii at Manoa, specializing in marine biology.

Shelton currently serves as an assistant professor of extension and outreach in the UOG Sea Grant Program. He also is a co-principal investigator in the Guam EPSCoR Program funded by the National Science Foundation.

"I am honored to be in a leadership position to make a difference," Shelton said.

Shelton grew up near the beach in Asan, Guam where he developed a lifelong interest in island environments. He is committed to broadening the participation and success of fellow Pacific Islanders in science, technology, engineering & mathematics. He served on the national board of the Society for the Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science and recently completed the 2017 Linton-Poodry SACNAS Leadership Institute at the American Association for the Advancement of Science. ***(UOG)***

COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION
PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
RFP17-CHCC/HR-21

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: SEPTEMBER 1, 2017 TIME: 1:00 PM
BID OPENING DATE: SEPTEMBER 1, 2017 TIME: 1:30 PM

"PETITION FOR EMPLOYMENT BASED VISA CLASSIFICATION, HUMAN RESOURCE, COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION"

COPIES OF THE RFQ PACKET MAY BE PICKED –UP AT CHCC PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY DIVISION-MEDICAL SUPPLY STORAGE FACILITY LOWER BASE SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE CHCC RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL PROPOSALS AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTIONS IN ANY PROPOSAL, IF TO DO SO SHALL BE IN THE INTEREST OF THE CHCC. ALL PROPOSALS SHALL BECOME THE EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OF THE COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION.

/S/ ESTHER L. MUNA
CHCC CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

/S/ PRISCILLA M. IAKOPO
CHCC DIRECTOR OF P&S

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB17-MUSEUM-204

SUBMISSION: SEPTEMBER 13, 2017 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"PURCHASE OF A 4 X 2 PICK-UP TRUCK WITH ACCESS CAB FOR THE NMI MUSEUM OF HISTORY & CULTURE"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENCION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES AND KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE GOVERNMENT.

/S/ JOHN DLR. GONZALES
CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF GOVERNORS

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP NO.: RFP17-BECQ/DEQ-192

SUBMISSION: SEPTEMBER 18, 2017 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"GROUNDWATER SAMPLING OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY UNEXPLODED ORDNANCE, A PROJECT UNDER THE BUREAU OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND COASTAL QUALITY"

THE SCOPE OF WORK IS AVAILABLE ON OR AFTER AUGUST 22, 2017 FROM THE BECQ OFFICE OR BY E-MAIL REQUEST TO derekchambers@becq.gov.mp QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS RFP CAN BE EMAILED TO derekchambers@becq.gov.mp NO LATER THAN THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS, SEPTEMBER 07, 2017.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES AND KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL PROPOSALS TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTION IN A PROPOSAL IF IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS. ALL PROPOSALS SHALL BECOME THE PROPERTY OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ FRANK M. RABAULIMAN
ADMINISTRATOR OF BECQ

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)
RFQ-17-CHCC/CGC-01

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: AUGUST 23, 2017 TIME: 1:00 PM
BID OPENING DATE: AUGUST 23, 2017 TIME: 1:30 PM

"SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER (SUD) TREATMENT SERVICES, COMMUNITY GUIDANCE CENTER (CGC), COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION"

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COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS JUDICIARY

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP NO.: RFP17-JUDICIARY-04

SUBMISSION DATE: August 29th, 2017 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

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/S/ ALEXANDRO C. CASTRO
CHIEF JUSTICE

/S/ JOHN T. VILLAGOMEZ
JUDICIARY PROCUREMENT OFFICER

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS JUDICIARY

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/S/ HON. ALEXANDRO C. CASTRO
JUDICIARY EXPENDITURE AUTHORITY

/S/ JOHN T. VILLAGOMEZ
JUDICIARY PROCUREMENT OFFICER

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Commonwealth Judiciary Administrative Office
Guma' Hustisia, Iimwal Aweewe, House of Justice
P.O. Box 502165, Saipan MP 96950
Telephone (670) 236-9770 Facsimile (670)236-9797

INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB17-JUDICIARY-11
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CHIEF JUSTICE

JOHN T. VILLAGOMEZ
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ALEXANDRO C. CASTRO
CHIEF JUSTICE

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ALEXANDRO C. CASTRO
CHIEF JUSTICE

JOHN T. VILLAGOMEZ
JUDICIARY PROCUREMENT OFFICER

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXVII, Issue No. 166

Published daily at 2/F JP Center,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

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EDITORIAL

Terror attacks in Spain should be met with a global response

Once again, there are flickering candles and flowers left on the streets of one of the world's great cities to mourn terror attack victims. This time, blood has been shed in and near the breathtaking Spanish city of Barcelona, a global tourism magnet known for its striking modernist basilica and vibrant street scene.

At least 14 people were killed when ordinary vehicles became weapons on Thursday and early Friday and mowed down people in two locations. One assault took place on the crowded sidewalks of a popular promenade in the heart of Barcelona. The other happened in Cambrils, a smaller city on the Mediterranean coast about 60 miles away. Thoughts and prayers from around the world are still a necessary balm for grieving families and a wounded nation. May we never grow so accustomed to ongoing terror attacks that we halfheartedly mourn innocent lives lost and fail to pause to denounce their murderers.

These words, however, must be accompanied by deeper determination to thwart extremists of all ideologies. Initial reports indicate that the Barcelona attacks were planned by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria and carried out by multiple people. This distinguishes it from a so-called "lone wolf" attack by someone with more tenuous ties to terrorism. The Barcelona attack's scope and coordination suggests that the Islamic State still has enough organizational resources to execute its hellish ambitions.

International cooperation is critical to track down the perpetrators and prevent another tragedy. Other nations have long been partners in the fight against terror. President Donald Trump should strongly signal the world that he values this collaboration and will seek to wield the world's resources to pursue justice. While a tweet would be helpful, this message would resonate far more strongly if Trump employed a more traditional presidential communications strategy.

The terror attacks in Spain follow last weekend's violence in Charlottesville, Va., spurred by right-wing extremists. The run of such tragic events may tempt some to tune out the news. Don't succumb to this. The Charlottesville attack drove home that terror flourishes within our borders as well as in faraway deserts. Every American shares the responsibility to work peacefully to stop it.

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Soaring student debt costs us all

By MARY CLARE AMSELEM
The Heritage Foundation

Mary Clare Amselem is a policy analyst in the Institute for Family, Community and Opportunity at The Heritage Foundation.

Parents across the United States tell their children that if they graduate from high school, go to college and get a job, they can embrace the American Dream.

Unfortunately, however, high college costs exacerbated by overgenerous federal lending policies have encouraged more students to take on high levels of student loan debt. As a result, graduates often leave college unprepared to pursue their career and life goals and are saddled with a debt burden that limits their upward mobility.

There was a time when a small amount of savings and a part-time job could get students through college with little or no debt. But today, more students than ever are turning to federal loans to finance their college education.

The federal government now originates and services about 90 percent of all student loans, but this federal largesse has done little to address college affordability. In 2014-2015, the average public and private debt held by students was $28,153 (in 2015 dollars), compared to $21,940 in 2000-2001.

Increases in borrowing over the past two decades have dwarfed increases in student enrollment. From 1990 to 2012, for example, college enrollment increased 62 percent, but the volume of loan borrowing increased 352 percent—a more than fourfold increase.

Put differently, in 1990, students borrowed $2,485 per year to attend college; by 2012, borrowing had nearly tripled to $6,928 annually.

This weighty increase in student loan debt presents problems for both students and taxpayers. A recent survey found that 56 percent of young people put off milestones such as getting married or buying a home because of student loan debt. Purdue University President Mitch Daniels has even argued that high student loan debt discourages entrepreneurship, which could have a significant effect on our nation's economy in the future.

By the same token, taxpayers increasingly bear the consequences of high student loan debt. In 2016, 43 percent of students with federal student loans, which amounts to about 9.3 million borrowers, were in default, in delinquency or had postponed payments. With the federal government now originating almost all student loans, taxpayers are left with the bill when students cannot pay off their debts.

Moreover, the current rate of increase in college tuition does not indicate that there is any relief in sight for taxpayers or students. Each year, more graduate students participate in the Grad PLUS loan program, which allows for borrowing up to the full cost of attendance. Similarly, parents of undergraduate students can take out a loan to finance their child's education under the Parent PLUS loan program, an option typically pursued after a student has already borrowed the maximum amount available through the Stafford loan program.

As borrowing increases through federal programs—and as debt builds—some policymakers propose to extend loan forgiveness, which transfers this debt from individuals or families to the American taxpayers, most of whom do not hold bachelor's degrees themselves. The Government Accountability Office recently projected that loan forgiveness programs will cost taxpayers $108 billion over the next 10 years.

Recent research suggests that federal involvement may be doing more harm than good. Economists at the Mercatus Center and the Federal Reserve Bank of New York have found a connection between federal student aid and increases in college tuition. Such research adds support to the Bennett Hypothesis, which posits that greater access to federal student aid encourages colleges and universities to raise their tuition prices.

As more Americans than ever before pursue higher education as a means of upward mobility, policymakers must review whether current policies are helping students to afford a college education—or making tuition more expensive for all.

The current trend of increasing student loan debt should concern all Americans. As students turn to the higher education system for more opportunities, this investment comes with significant financial burdens for both students and taxpayers.

In order to capitalize on the potential of American higher education, not only must students graduate with manageable debt loads, but they should leave college prepared to pursue their career and life goals. But with fewer students paying off their debt and more financial responsibility being shifted to the taxpayers, higher education's ability to jump-start economic mobility is limited.

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Know the word for being home alone and getting drunk in your undies?

By JAYVEE VALLEJERA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jayvee Vallejera is the managing editor of Saipan Tribune.

As has become a habit in the last four weeks, I would wake up at 2am, pass by my laptop, and delude myself into thinking, "It's just going to be a minute. I'll just check my Facebook." Or "Let me just look if I have any new email."

And, as has become habit, I would go to the news wires and find out what else is happening with the world. It usually is the Associated Press or Reuters. And then I see the news.

International news these days make you want to crawl under a rock and wait until rosier news comes along. I must be checking the wrong news sources because I am getting clobbered with bad news and worse news that no amount of weekend is lightening up.

How was I to know that the North Korean leader's threat against Guam and President Trump's response was just a faint whiff of what would later turn into an excruciating episode of the six o'clock news?

The peeing contest between Kim Jong Un and Donald Trump last week was a painfully funny spectacle from the peanut gallery. But the appalling brutality in Charlottesville between neo-Nazis and white supremacists and counterdemonstrators was a cold dash of reality—a dreadful reminder that race relations in this country still has a long way to go, reminiscent of the violence so common in third-world countries instead of a first-world society. A woman was killed at that rally, and scores of others were injured, when a car plowed into the counterdemonstrators.

That was soon followed by news that terrorists have struck in Barcelona, Spain, which had just hosted the World Pride Madrid, with an Islamic extremist cell carrying out vehicle attacks in Barcelona and a seaside resort. A van plowed into a promenade packed with pedestrians in Barcelona, killing 13 and injuring 120.

Suspects in the Spain attack were still being hunted when news broke of a knife attack in western Finland that left two people dead and seven others wounded.

The political activist and revolutionary Thomas Paine said it best: "These are the times that try men's souls."

The hum of human activity is such that it is probably a good thing that the world can turn a collective eye to the heavens today to witness what promises to be a once-in-a-lifetime event: a total solar eclipse. Yesterday's AP reported that millions of Americans have converged on a narrow corridor stretching from Oregon to South Carolina to watch the moon blot out the sun for a couple of minutes in the first total solar eclipse to sweep coast to coast in 99 years. The moon hasn't thrown this much shade at the U.S. since 1918. That was the country's last coast-to-coast total eclipse.

I don't really know what it all means but a pundit pointed out that Donald Trump hasn't had a year yet on his post as president of the United States but the U.S. is already having a nuclear fight with North Korea, a slew of advisory councils have abandoned him or resigned en masse, a standoff between neo-Nazis and counterdemonstrators have resulted in a death of a woman, and then the sun will be blotted out for a couple of minutes. A sign of the times?

■■■

It appears I owe Galvin an apology. Mount Carmel might not realize it but the guy, besides being busy in his role as president of the school, is also active with the school's drama club, creates video productions on the side, functions as the school's one-man corporate affairs office as the school's press officer, and is busy with his continuing education pursuits. However, I have inadvertently forgotten Mount Carmel School despite it being deserving of much kudos.

In a previous column, I griped about the kind of PR our office gets and did cite a few examples of well-written materials. I forgot to mention the PRs we get from Mount Carmel, as well as the ones from the Office of Insular Affairs, The Compassionate Friends of Saipan, Saipan Cares for Animals, and a slew of others that are obviously well-written and do not make much demands on a copy-editor or proofreader.

Another time, I was griping (I seem to be doing that a lot, hmmmm) about the theater scene on island and I totally forgot to mention the plays that Mount Carmel School and its Drama Club have staged over the years. The club is one of the most active on the islands and deserves much commendation.

■■■

And now, here are a few weird words to get us through the week:

pareidolia: A psychological phenomenon involving a stimulus (an image or a sound) wherein the mind perceives a familiar pattern of something where none exists. A common example is seeing an image of Jesus on a slice of tomato.

tsundoku. The condition of acquiring reading materials but letting them pile up in one's home without reading them.

schadenfreude. The pleasure derived by someone from another person's misfortune.

mudita. "Sympathetic joy" or "happiness in another's good fortune" is cited as an example of the opposite of *schadenfreude*. Alternatively, envy, which is unhappiness in another's good fortune, could be considered the counterpart of *schadenfreude*.

kalsarikännit. The "feeling when you are going to get drunk home alone in your underwear"—with no intention of going out.

No need to wonder. Kalsarikannit is my newest favorite word!

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Pot bill now with the committee

The marijuana bill that I helped create is now in the Senate. I can now tell people who ask me that the bill is at least on the tarmac and going through the final pre-flight checks. There were some disagreements about the final draft but, fortunately, we do have a democratic system. I am thankful to the senator for getting the legislation on the tarmac but that doesn't mean it is safe to fly yet, which is why it is being submitted to the Senate Committee on Judiciary, Government and Law.

So I am thankful for the process and so should the rest of our society because the things I disagreed with in the bill still have a chance to be fixed. This committee has the power to fix the bill and their character is about to be tested.

It was the leadership of the 19th Senate who sent me to Colorado for the specific purpose of helping the Senate create the best bill possible. I'm their own expert, paid for with taxpayers' money! So if they can't believe me, then who can they believe? I just hope this important and critical fact that I'm their expert and co-author won't be trashed because there may not be anyone in the CNMI more informed on this subject.

Proposing marijuana legislation and getting it right are two different horses. So I hope and pray that the many people with a vested interest in legalization and for the CNMI that the Senate committee and I can get it right the first time.

On a final note, the upcoming Beer & BBQ Festival is a great idea but an even better idea would be the Pot & BBQ Festival. Marijuana is much better and even safer than beer. Period. A Pot & BBQ Festival equals a generation of new tourists and a lot of happy, peaceful, high people who will eat all the food.

Ambrose M. Bennett
Kagman, Saipan

Take immigration study with grain of salt

By RAMESH PONNURU
Bloomberg View

Ramesh Ponnuru is a Bloomberg View columnist. He is a senior editor of National Review *and the author of* The Party of Death: The Democrats, the Media, the Courts, and the Disregard for Human Life. *Readers may email him at rponnuru@bloomberg.net.*

A new study says that halving legal immigration, as President Donald Trump and Republican Sens. Tom Cotton and David Perdue want to do, will have a negative effect on the size of the economy and the labor force. A lot of journalists are citing the study, with some of them noting that it is associated with the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School, which Trump attended.

The business school has more claims to distinction than that. But this study does not really tell us anything important about immigration policy.

That's not meant as a criticism of the people who produced it so much as it is a caution about interpreting it. The economy, according to the Penn Wharton Budget Model, will be 2 percent smaller in 2040 if the bill passes than if it doesn't. Also by 2040, the country will have 4.6 million fewer jobs.

Let's assume that these numbers are right. We still have to ask: So what?

Normally it would be a strong argument against a policy that it reduced the size of the economy and the number of jobs, and a strong argument for it if it had the opposite effects. But a policy that changes the national population has to be evaluated differently.

If someone proposed annexing Canada, we would not think he had made a strong case just by pointing out that the two countries' combined economic output would be higher than either one alone. A proposal to bring the population of Canada into our country couldn't be defended that way either.

Of course the economy is going to be smaller with fewer immigrants. But that could be the case even if reducing immigration did not reduce the income of a single person in the U.S. Nearly as inevitably, fewer immigrants means a smaller number of workers here. But that doesn't mean that anyone in the country would lose a job (or fail to get one) because of the reduction in immigration.

What we most want to know, in thinking through the economic impact of the bill, is what effect it would have on jobs and income for three groups: native-born Americans, the legal immigrants who are already here, and the immigrants who would still come here if it passes. The analysis does little to answer the question—but what it does tell us suggests that the impact would be positive in some respects and negligible in others.

By 2040, the model projects that the U.S. economy will include 4.6 million fewer jobs because of reduced immigration. But over that same period, we will have brought in around nine million fewer immigrants. By itself, this does not suggest that the job prospects for the American legal residents of 2040 will have worsened much because of the bill. They may even have improved because of it: The study says that "the domestic worker participation rate won't increase enough to fill the jobs that would have been held by immigrants who are no longer allowed in the country," which is an oblique and grudging way of acknowledging that it will increase.

The best argument against the bill based on the model is that per-capita GDP will be 0.3 percent lower in 2040 with it than without it. If that sounds less hair-raising to you than 4.6 million lost jobs, you're right. It's a trivial number, especially when you consider the uncertainty of any model and the large number of other factors that could affect our economy. And 0.3 percent of income might be worth paying for higher wages for low-skilled workers (the model doesn't tell us whether their wages would rise) and fewer social tensions related to immigration.

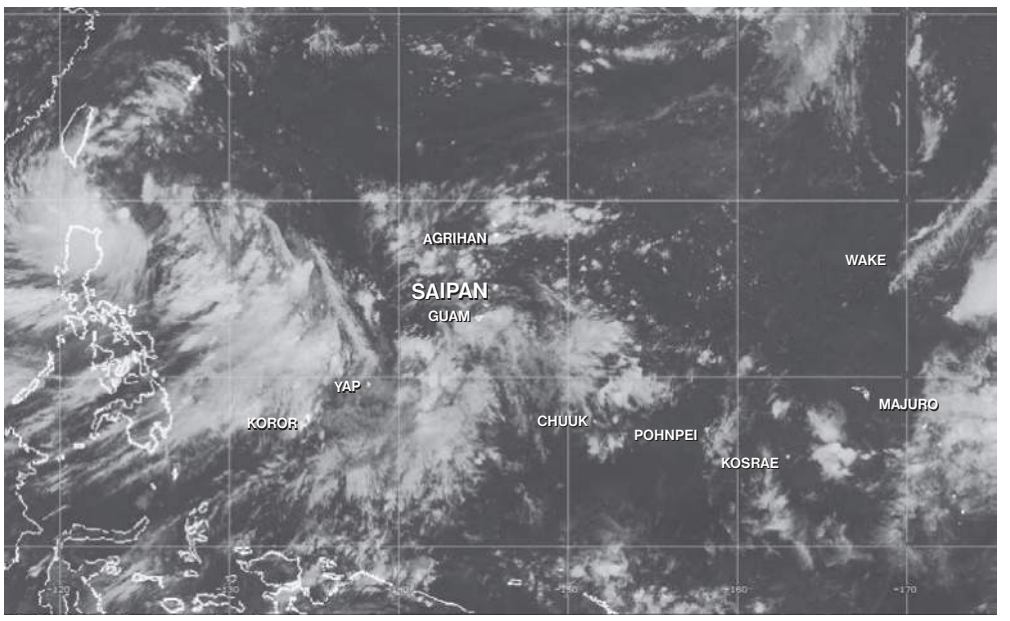
As the debate over the Cotton-Perdue legislation goes forward, keep an eye on how much its opponents lean on economic models like this one. The more they do, the weaker a case they have.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms. Light and variable winds.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 5 to 10 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲88° ▼78°	▲89° ▼78°	▲90° ▼79°	▲90° ▼79°	▲90° ▼79°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 6:35 AM, MONDAY, AUGUST 21, 2017
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

An upper low was located north of Saipan and was moving generally westward. It was taking shower and thunderstorm activity with it. However, lingering moisture and the approach of yet another surface trough and upper low will allow for additional showers and isolated thunderstorms through Tuesday. Beyond that, some ridging and drier air is expected to move in for the latter portion of the week. No significant changes were made to the forecast. Seas remain relatively quiet, in the 2 to 3 foot range. Surf is 3 to 5 feet on the eastern shores and lower elsewhere.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Palau	Thunderstorms	85° / 77°
Yap	Partly Cloudy	86° / 79 °
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	87° / 79°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	86° / 77°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	86° / 77°
Majuro	Partly Cloudy	85° / 82°

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	59° / 46°
Beijing	Rain	84° / 70°
Hong Kong	Thunderstorms	90° / 82°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	88° / 77°
London	Mostly Cloudy	77° / 64°
Los Angeles	Sunny	81° / 65°
Manila	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Melbourne	Rain	61° / 39°
Miami	Thunderstorms	88° / 81°
New York	Partly Cloudy	89° / 75°
Osaka	Thunderstorms	91° / 81°
Paris	Mostly Sunny	82° / 63°
Busan	Partly Cloudy	88° / 81°
Rome	Sunny	88° / 64°
Salem	Partly Cloudy	92° / 74°
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	65° / 56°
Seoul	Thunderstorms	82° / 77°
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	90° / 77°
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	94° / 77°

NMI CRIME STOPPERS
Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
1:54 AM	LOW TIDE	0.87
7:10 AM	HIGH TIDE	2.04
2:15 PM	LOW TIDE	-0.31
8:47 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.98

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:03 AM	6:36 PM
Wednesday	6:03 AM	6:35 PM
Thursday	6:03 AM	6:34 PM
Friday	6:03 AM	6:34 PM
Saturday	6:03 AM	6:33 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	6:11 AM	7:01 PM	-
Wednesday	7:08 AM	7:47 PM	-
Thursday	8:02 AM	8:30 PM	-
Friday	8:55 AM	9:12 PM	-
Saturday	9:45 AM	9:53 PM	-

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF AUGUST 21, 2017

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA6394	4:15am	5:05am	Daily
UA6392	8:40am	9:30am	Daily
UA6391	1:30pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7 via Rota
UA6390	2:20pm	3:10pm	2, 3, 6
UA6398	6:05pm	6:55pm	Daily
UA6396	9:50pm	10:40pm	Daily

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

UA6391	1:30pm	2:05pm	1, 4, 5, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)

UA6391	2:35pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

TW308	1:35am	5:20am	2, 3, 4
OZ626	2:20am	6:00am	1
TW308	2:35am	6:20am	6, 7
OZ626	2:50am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
7C3403	4:45am	8:30am	Daily
LJ652	4:45am	8:35am	1, 4, 5, 7
7C3401	4:00pm	7:45pm	Daily
ZE582	4:45pm	8:35pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

7C3451	3:10am	6:10am	1, 7
OZ608	3:10am	6:20am	4, 7
7C3451	4:00am	7:05am	4, 5

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	5:20am	8:00am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6

SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (HGH)

JD396	7:00am	10:25am	1
JD396	4:50pm	8:15pm	4

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764	1:30am	6:35am	3, 5, 7

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL297	4:15pm	7:00pm	Daily

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ626/701	2:20am	11:05am	1 via ICN
OZ626/701	2:50am	11:05am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA6394/191	4:15am	8:55am	2, 3, 6, 7 via GUM
UA6394/PR111	4:15am	9:00am	1, 2, 4, 6via GUM
UA6394/PR111	4:15am	9:15am	3, 5, 7 via GUM
PR1572	4:40am	6:45am	1, 4
UA6391/183	1:30pm	8:50pm	5 via Rota-GUM
UA6391/183	1:30pm	9:10pm	1, 4, 7 via Rota-GUM
UA6391/193	1:30pm	10:40pm	5 via Rota-GUM-ROR
UA6390/183	2:20pm	8:50pm	2 via GUM
UA6390/183	2:20pm	9:10pm	3, 6 via GUM
UA6390/193	2:20pm	10:40pm	2 via GUM-ROR

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

HX077	2:00am	5:00am	1, 4
OZ626/721	2:20am	11:40am	1 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UO43	4:40am	8:10am	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7
UA6391/159	1:30pm	9:50pm	1, 5 via Rota-GUM
UA6390/159	2:20pm	9:50pm	3, 6 via GUM

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA6393	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
UA6395	7:15am	8:05am	Daily
UA6391	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
UA6390	12:10pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6 via Rota
UA6397	4:45pm	5:35pm	Daily
UA6399	8:30pm	9:20pm	Daily

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)

UA6390	12:10pm	12:45pm	2, 3, 6

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

UA6390	1:15pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3402	9:30am	3:00pm	Daily
ZE583	10:05am	3:35pm	2, 4, 6, 7
ZE581	10:10am	3:55pm	Daily
TW307	7:05pm	12:35am+1	1, 2, 3
OZ625	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
TW307	8:05pm	1:35am+1	5, 6
OZ625	8:15pm	1:45am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily
LJ651	10:00pm	3:30am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

7C3452	9:00pm	2:10am+1	4
OZ607	9:05pm	1:55am+1	3, 6
7C3452	9:05pm	2:10am+1	3, 6, 7

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:20pm	4:30am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5

HANGZHOU (HGH)-SAIPAN

JD395	8:10am	3:30pm	4
JD395	10:05pm	5:30am+1	7

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763	4:25pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL298	10:20am	2:50pm	Daily

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA190/6397	9:55am	5:35pm	2, 3, 6, 7 via GUM
OZ702/625	12:15pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/625	12:15pm	1:45am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR1571	9:20pm	3:40am+1	3, 7
UA192/6395	9:45pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via ROR-GUM
UA184/6395	10:25pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
PR110/UA6395	10:55pm	8:05am+1	Daily via GUM
UA184/6395	11:30pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ722/625	1:10pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/625	1:10pm	1:45am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UO424:50pm	12:05am+1		2, 6
HX076	5:20pm	12:30am+1	3, 7
UO42	6:05pm	1:10am+1	1
UO42	6:10pm	1:00am+1	3
UO42	6:10pm	1:10am+1	4
UO42	6:40pm	2:00am+1	7
UA116/6395	10:45pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, LJ Jin Air, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, ZE Eastar Jet, PR PAL Express; ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The* Saipan Tribune *is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

Business

INSIDER Q&A: General Motors learning the rental business

DETROIT (AP)—General Motors Co. started its car-sharing service, Maven, just over a year ago, placing Chevrolets and Cadillacs in New York apartment buildings for occupants to rent.

Since then, the service has grown exponentially. Maven is still working with apartment dwellers, but it is also offering hourly and daily rental cars in 17 North American cities. It also offers Maven Gig, a service that lets people rent cars to do odd jobs, like ride-hailing for Lyft or delivering food for GrubHub. Maven Gig expanded into Los Angeles earlier this month; it's coming to Boston, Phoenix, Washington, Baltimore and Detroit this fall.

Maven is now moving onto college campuses. This week, it became the exclusive car-share provider to the University of Southern California. Students will be able to rent vehicles for $5 per hour, a lower rate than Maven's usual starting price of $8. College administrators will have their own dedicated vehicle to reserve.

Maven now has 7,000 total vehicles in its fleet, including hundreds of all-electric Chevrolet Bolts and big SUVs like the Chevrolet Equinox and Cadillac Escalade. That's good exposure for GM, which says the typical Maven user is 30 years old. The company is just starting to track whether users are more likely to purchase a GM car after driving them through Maven.

"We're not running after shiny objects. We're building a service capability and a platform," says Julia Steyn, GM's vice president for Urban Mobility and Maven.

Steyn recently talked to The Associated Press about Maven. Answers have been edited and condensed.

Q. Why is it important for an automaker to offer this kind of service? Why not just build cars and let others rent them?

A. It comes from where the customer preferences are. You look at the changing environment and you clearly see a very growing part of the population who wants to interact with cars in a different way, and it's not ownership. I'm a big believer that the preference for ownership will continue, and it will be determined by what you do, where you live and how you deploy the vehicle. But the growth part of this population... wants the fractional ownership of it.

So it's very important for automakers... to become a service provider and interact with the customer in a different way.

AP

This photo provided by General Motors Co. shows Julia Steyn, GM's vice president for Urban Mobility and Maven. GM started its Maven car-sharing service in 2016, which has grown exponentially since then.

And being a service provider is very different. You have different customer habit formation, different marketing, you need to have a platform that you can integrate the offerings and differentiate the offerings. It's not just the vehicle and an app. It's the whole ecosystem around this that you have to develop as a service to make sure you're successful. It's understanding how all of your assets interact together.

Q. Are customers in different cities using Maven differently?

A. What is different city by city is the commuter patterns and ultimately the end use of what people are using the vehicle for. In New York, there's great public transportation, so the vehicles are used for traveling on the weekends. They're also used to run errands, whether on an hourly basis or longer term. People just want to get out of the city. In Chicago, we find a lot of work time usage. We see in the financial district that people are using this for work and going places. And in L.A., it's very regional. People don't go from one part of L.A. to another very often. But all in all, we see very strong growth in every market. It's natural, because I think people are getting more familiar with who we are.

Q. Is Maven profitable?

A. Some parts of what we're developing are, obviously, an investment, whether you look at infrastructure development, the technology development and growth. We always have to, especially being a year-and-a-half old, invest in the growth and the platform. However, and we do look at it this way, what does Maven as an investment bring to the rest of the corporation? GM is better off with Maven, so we're clearing more than 100 percent return on the investment.

We're looking at it holistically: Developing the capability for transportation as a service, the technology, the infrastructure, the data, fleet management, the ability to interact with the customers. All of this adds to what we do and doesn't cannibalize the core business, so on the enterprise-wide view, we're doing very well.

Supervisor perplexed at making less than subordinate

Q: Shortly after being promoted, I discovered that one of the employees I manage makes significantly more than I do. "Jake" is not even an outstanding performer, yet his pay is 15 percent higher than mine. Since I'm managing a department of 12 people, this makes absolutely no sense.

I don't have access to salary data, so for all I know, other employees under my watch might also be making more than me. I haven't mentioned Jake's salary to management because my promotion included a nice raise and I don't want to appear ungrateful. However, this doesn't seem right. What do you think?

A: Although one might logically assume that managers always make more than their employees, that is not necessarily the case. Based on available information, I have no way of knowing why Jake has the bigger paycheck, but there could be several reasons.

If this is a small private business, management may have never implemented a formal compensation plan. Without an organizing structure, salaries just evolve haphazardly over time, resulting in illogical discrepancies. Amazingly, some companies don't even establish salary caps, so ongoing raises can cause pay to skyrocket well beyond the value of the job.

YOUR OFFICE COACH

By MARIE G. MCINTYRE
McClatchy-Tribune News Service

Marie G. McIntyre is a workplace coach and the author of Secrets to Winning at Office Politics*. Send in questions and get free coaching tips at http://www.yourofficecoach.com, or follow her on Twitter @ officecoach.*

Even with a compensation plan, it's still possible for employees to be paid more than their boss. Managers are usually on a higher pay grade — for example, if Jake's job is a grade 10, then yours might be a 12 — but every pay grade has a minimum and maximum salary. Therefore, someone at the high end of a lower grade might make more than someone at the low end of a higher grade.

Finally, in some fields, it is not at all unusual for seasoned employees to make more than those who manage them. If you are supervising engineers, architects, attorneys or other highly trained professionals, this salary difference could be both appropriate and expected.

But if, after examining all the facts, you still can't figure out the rationale, then you should politely ask your boss or human resources manager for an explanation. Apart from personal curiosity, you really do need to understand how your staff is being paid.

Q: One of my employees repeatedly makes comments about how hard she works. This happens almost every day. Why do you think she does this?

A: The most important question is whether you agree with her assessment. If so, then one wonders why she feels the need to keep reminding you. Perhaps she's implying that her workload is too heavy or that she would like some time off. She also might be fishing for a compliment because she's feeling unappreciated.

But if her motivation is unclear, the simple solution is to ask. For example: "Mary, I've noticed that you often mention how hard you're working. I certainly agree that you're a hard worker, so I'm wondering if there's something you're trying to tell me."

On the other hand, if this employee seems to be overestimating her level of effort, then you may need to clarify your performance expectations. Her definition of hard work could be quite different from your own.

US, Canada, Mexico pledge quick work to update NAFTA

WASHINGTON (AP)—U.S., Canadian and Mexican negotiators are pledging to work quickly to update the North American Free Trade Agreement, a 23-year-old pact that President Donald Trump has called the worst trade deal in history.

The first round of NAFTA renegotiations talks were wrapped up Sunday. The three countries said they planned to meet again in Mexico Sept. 1-5, in Canada late next month and back in the United States in October.

They did not offer details on the five-day talks.

The negotiations are likely to prove contentious. U.S. Trade Rep. Robert Lighthizer declared Wednesday that the United States "is not interested in a mere tweaking" of NAFTA and will seek an ambitious rewrite of a deal the Trump administration blames for hundreds of thousands of lost U.S. factory jobs.

NAFTA did away with most barriers, including tariffs, on trade between the U.S., Canada and Mexico.

Trump and other NAFTA critics say the agreement encouraged manufacturers to move south of the border to take advantage of lower-wage Mexican labor. Lighthizer said the U.S. wants a revamped agreement to do more to ensure that products are made in NAFTA trade bloc and specifically in the United States.

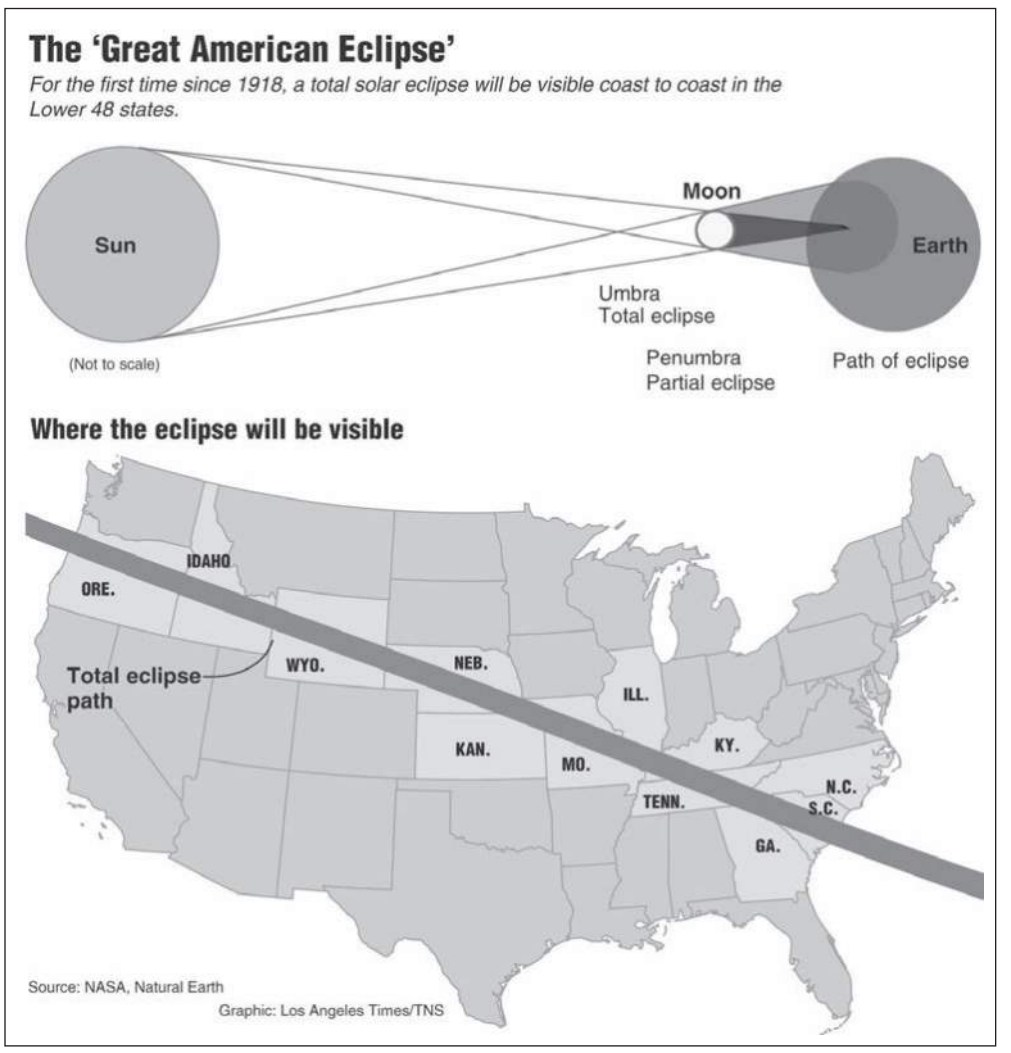
The Canadian and Mexican negotiators agree that NAFTA needs to be updated, but they have defended it as an economic success story for expanding trade between the three countries.

Mexican Economy Minister Ildefonso Guajardo said xhat the start of the Washington talks that he hoped differences could be narrowed in the next round of negotiations.

Nation

Eclipse eve: Millions converge across US to see sun go dark

By MARCIA DUNN
AP AEROSPACE WRITER



Total Eclipse

Millions of Americans converged on a narrow corridor stretching from Oregon to South Carolina to watch the moon blot out the midday sun Monday for a wondrous couple of minutes in the first total solar eclipse to sweep coast to coast in 99 years.

Veteran eclipse watchers warned the uninitiated to get ready to be blown away.

Planetariums and museums posted "Sold out of eclipse glasses" on their front doors. Signs along highways reminded motorists of "Solar Eclipse Monday," while cars bore the message "Eclipse or bust."

With 200 million people within a day's drive of the path of totality, towns and parks braced for monumental crowds. It's expected to be the most observed, most studied and most photographed eclipse ever. Not to mention the most festive, what with all the parties.

In Salem, Oregon, a field outside the state fairgrounds was transformed into a campground in advance of an eclipse-watching party for 8,500.

"It's one of those 'check the box' kind of things in life," said Hilary O'Hollaren, who drove 30 miles from Portland with her two teenagers and a tent, plus a couple friends.

Astronomers consider a full solar eclipse the grandest of cosmic spectacles.

The Earth, moon and sun line up perfectly every one to three years, briefly turning day into night for a sliver of the planet. But these sights normally are in no man's land, like the vast Pacific or the poles. This will be the first eclipse of the social media era to pass through such a heavily populated area.

The moon hasn't thrown this much shade at the U.S. since 1918. That was the country's last coast-to-coast total eclipse.

In fact, the U.S. mainland hasn't seen a total solar eclipse since 1979—and even then, only five states in the Northwest experienced total darkness before the eclipse veered in Canada.

Monday's total eclipse will cast a shadow that will race through 14 states, entering near Lincoln City, Oregon, at 1:16 p.m. EDT, moving diagonally across the heartland and then exiting near Charleston, South Carolina, at 2:47 p.m. EDT. The path will cut 2,600 miles (4,200 kilometers) across the land and will be just 60 to 70 miles (96 kilometers to 113 kilometers) wide.

Mostly clear skies beckoned along much of the route, according to the National Weather Service .

Shawnee National Forest in southern Illinois will see the longest stretch of darkness: 2 minutes and 44 seconds.

All of North America will get at least a partial eclipse. Central America and the top of South America will also see the moon cover part of the sun.

Michele Arsenault of New York City and her son, Michael, spent Sunday driving south and stopped for dinner in Asheville, North Carolina, at the Tupelo Honey Cafe where several other tables were also occupied by travelers heading to eclipse zones. Arsenault has been comparing weather charts for days as she finalized plans and had lodging reserved in Knoxville, Tennessee, and a reserved parking spot in Sweetwater, about 50 miles (80 kilometers) away. Her son, who's about to start graduate school, said he tagged along because "I appreciate the idea of a good adventure."

NASA and other scientists will be watching and analyzing the eclipse from telescopes the ground and in orbit, the International Space Station, airplanes and scores of high-altitude balloons, which will beam back live video. Citizen scientists will monitor animal and plant behavior as daylight turns into twilight and the temperature drops.

NASA's associate administrator for science missions, Thomas Zurbuchen, took to the skies for a dry run Sunday. He will usher in the eclipse over the Pacific Coast from a NASA plane.

"Can't wait for the cosmic moment Mon morning," he tweeted.

Near Victoria, British Columbia, where 91 percent of the sun will be eclipsed, science and math teacher Clayton Uyeda is planning to watch from a ferry along with his wife. He said he is "expecting to have a real sense of connection with the heavens."

He has similarly lofty hopes for his students if they can bring themselves to look up at the sky instead of down at their electronic devices.

Scientists everywhere agree with Uyeda: Put the phones and cameras down and enjoy the greatest natural show on Earth with your own (protected) eyes.

The only time it's safe to look directly without protective eyewear is during totality, when the sun is 100 percent covered. Otherwise, keep the solar specs on or use pinhole projectors that can cast an image of the eclipse.

The next total solar eclipse in the U.S. will be in 2024. The next coast-to-coast one will not be until 2045.

Sex offenders can live next door to victims in many states

EDMOND, Okla. (AP)—A convicted sex offender who molested his niece when she was 7 years old moved in next door to his victim nearly a dozen years after he was sent to prison for the crime.

Outraged, the Oklahoma woman, now 21, called lawmakers, the police and advocacy groups to plead with them to take action. Danyelle Dyer soon discovered that what Harold Dwayne English did in June is perfectly legal in the state—as well as in 44 others that don't specifically bar sex offenders from living near their victims, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.

"I always felt safe in my home, but it made me feel like I couldn't go home, I couldn't have my safe space anymore," Dyer told The Associated Press, which typically doesn't identify victims of sexual assault, but is doing so in Dyer's case because she agreed to allow her name to be used in hopes of drawing attention to the issue. "He would mow in between our houses. Him moving in brought back a lot of those feelings."

Advocacy groups say the Oklahoma case appears to be among the first in the U.S. where a sex offender has exploited the loophole, which helps explain why dozens of other states have unknowingly allowed it to exist.

"This is something that I would dare say was never envisioned would happen," said Richard Barajas, a retired Texas judge and executive director of the nonprofit National Organization for Victim Assistance. "In all the years that I've been involved with the criminal justice system, I've never seen a case like this."

Alabama, Arkansas, Indiana, Tennessee and West Virginia have laws dictating how far away sex offenders must stay from their victims—1,000 feet in Tennessee, for example, and 2,000 feet in Arkansas. Other states haven't addressed the issue, though like Oklahoma they have laws prohibiting sex offenders from living within a certain distance of a church, school, day care, park or other facility where children are present.

"You assume it can't happen and then realize there is no provision preventing it from happening," said one Oklahoma prosecutor, Rogers County District Attorney Matt Ballard, whose agency is responsible for keeping tabs on sex offenders in his area. "To have even the possibility of an offender living next to the victim is extremely troubling."

Arkansas passed its provision in 2007. State Sen. Jeremy Hutchinson, a former prosecutor, said lawmakers drafted the provision out of "common sense," not as a response to a situation like Dyer's.

But Barajas, whose group discussed the loophole with attendees at its annual training event this past week, said support for such laws typically gain traction "when someone who was impacted steps up," like Dyer.

"Legislation is never created in a vacuum," he said.

Oklahoma lawmakers have now drafted legislation to close the loophole, using Dyer as their champion.

"Of the 70,000 square miles in Oklahoma, this individual happened to choose a place next door to the victim," said state Rep. Kyle Hilbert, who represents Dyer's mostly rural district and is sponsoring the legislation.

1979 Klan-Nazi attack survivor hopes for a 'justice river'

GREENSBORO, N.C. (AP)—The Rev. Nelson Johnson needs no reminders of the massacre of five of his labor-activist friends almost 40 years ago—he still has the faded scar on his left arm, left by a Nazi who stabbed him as white supremacists descended on a march for workers through black neighborhoods in Greensboro.

But the violence surrounding the Aug. 12 march by Ku Klux Klansmen and Nazis in Charlottesville, Virginia, and the death of a young woman hit by a car there, brought the events of Nov. 3, 1979, in sharper focus for him.

"I was horrified," he said.

Johnson, now 74, was a member of the Workers Viewpoint Organization, which planned a march through a public housing project in Greensboro before a labor conference on Nov. 3, 1979. While the focus was on workers, textile mill wages and brown lung disease, it was also billed as a "Death to the Klan" rally. Both the rally title and the organization's decision to rename itself the Communist Workers Party were mistakes, Johnson now acknowledges.

Nazis and Ku Klux Klansmen drove into the march and then fired at demonstrators, and a report found that some demonstrators also were armed and fired in response. Five marchers were killed and at least 10 people were wounded, including Johnson. All-white juries at two trials acquitted the Klan and Nazi members, who claimed self-defense. Testimony showed both the police and the then-Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms had been warned by informants about the Klan-Nazi plans.

Members of the Greensboro Police Department, along with Klan and Nazi members, were found liable at a civil trial for the death of one victim, and the city paid $351,000 to his family. The details were outlined in a report , completed in 2006 by the Greensboro Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

A Nazi knifed Johnson's left arm, which Johnson had used defensively to prevent a more serious wound to his abdomen. A light scar, faded over 38 years, is barely visible, and Johnson can't move one finger because of where the knife sliced a muscle.

Asia

US warship collides with tanker near Singapore; 10 missing

SINGAPORE (AP)—At least 10 U.S. sailors are missing after the USS John S. McCain collided with a tanker early Monday east of Singapore, the second accident involving a ship from the Navy's 7th Fleet in the Pacific in two months.

The Navy said five other sailors were hurt in the collision between the guided-missile destroyer and the 183-meter (600-foot) Alnic MC, an oil and chemical tanker. Four of them were evacuated by a Singaporean navy helicopter to a hospital Singapore for treatment of non-life threatening injuries and one did not require further medical attention.

The McCain had been heading to Singapore on a routine port visit after conducting a sensitive freedom of navigation operation last week by sailing near one of China's man-made islands in the South China Sea.

It wasn't immediately clear if the Liberian-flagged Alnic sustained damage or casualties.

The McCain was damaged on its port side aft, or left rear, from the collision that happened at 5:24 a.m., the Navy's 7th Fleet said, but was heading to port under its own power.

Malaysia's navy chief Ahmad Kamarulzaman Ahmad Badaruddin tweeted that two ships as well as aircraft from its navy and air force have been deployed to help look for the missing U.S. sailors.

The Navy said Osprey aircraft and Seahawk helicopters from the USS America were assisting in the search. It also said tugboats and Singaporean naval and coast guard vessels were in the area to render assistance.

There was no immediate explanation for the collision and the Navy said an investigation would be conducted. Singapore, a city-state at the southernmost tip of Malaysia, is one of the world's busiest ports and a U.S. ally, with its naval base regularly visited by American warships.

The collision is the second involving a ship from the Navy's 7th Fleet in the Pacific in two months. Seven sailors died in June when the USS Fitzgerald and a container ship hit each other in waters off Japan.

The Fitzgerald's captain was relieved of command and other sailors were being punished after the Navy found poor seamanship and flaws in keeping watch contributed to the collision, the Navy announced last week. An investigation into how and why the Fitzgerald collided with the other ship was not finished, but enough details were known to take those actions, the Navy said.

President Donald Trump has expressed concern for the McCain's crew.

Trump returned to Washington on Sunday night from his New Jersey golf club. When reporters shouted questions to him about the McCain, he responded, "That's too bad."

About two hours later, Trump tweeted that "thoughts and prayers" are with the McCain's sailors as search and rescue efforts continue.

The 154-meter (505 foot) McCain, named after U.S. Sen. John McCain's father and grandfather who were both U.S. admirals, is based at the 7th Fleet's homeport of Yokosuka, Japan. It was commissioned in 1994 and has a crew of 23 officers, 24 chief petty officers and 291 enlisted sailors, according the Navy's website.

AP

In this photo released by the Royal Malaysian Navy, the U.S guided-missile destroyer USS *John S. McCain* is seen after a collision, off Johor, Malaysia, Monday, Aug. 21, 2017.

ASIAN BRIEFS

China to relaunch the world's fastest bullet trains

BEIJING (AP)—China is relaunching the world's fastest bullet trains, running at 350 kilometers (217 miles) per hour. The trains will service the route from Beijing to Shanghai starting next month, making the 1,250-kilometer (777-mile) journey in just 4 hours, 30 minutes. Other routes are being added. China first ran trains at 350 kilometers per hour in August 2008, but cut speeds back to 250-300 kilometers per hour in 2011 following a two-train collision near the city of Wenzhou that killed 40 people and injured 191. China has laid more than 20,000 kilometers (12,400 miles) of high-speed rail, with a target of adding another 10,000 kilometers (6,214 miles) by 2020. China has spent an estimated $360 billion on high-speed rail, building by far the largest network in the world.

3rd New Zealand party leader quits in close election race

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)—Three weeks ago, New Zealand's conservative National Party appeared to be cruising to a fourth straight election victory. Opinion polls showed the party had strong support and the opposition was struggling to inspire people ahead of September's general election. But much has changed since then due to the rise of Opposition Leader Jacinda Ardern, and the latest polls indicate the election will be closely contested. The latest ruction came Monday, when United Future leader Peter Dunne resigned, the third party leader to quit in as many weeks. His small party supported the government and his move comes as a blow to Prime Minister Bill English and his National Party. Dunne said there's a mood for change in the district where he has served as a lawmaker for 33 years, something that's only become apparent in recent weeks.

Scholars: Refuse to bow down to China censorship pressure

BEIJING (AP)—Scholars have started an online petition to urge Cambridge University Press to restore more than 300 politically sensitive articles removed from its website in China after a request from authorities. The petition circulating among academics calls on CUP to turn down censorship requests from the Chinese government. The petition says that it is "disturbing ... that China is attempting to export its censorship on topics that do not fit its preferred narrative." By Monday, more than 140 people had signed the 2-day-old petition on change.org. Cambridge University Press said Friday it had complied with a request to block certain articles from "The China Quarterly" within China. They touch on politically sensitive subjects including the 1989 Tiananmen Square crackdown, the 1966-76 Cultural Revolution and the status of Tibet.

US and S. Korean troops start drills amid N. Korea standoff

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—U.S. and South Korean troops kicked off their annual drills Monday that come after President Donald Trump and North Korea exchanged warlike rhetoric in the wake of the North's two intercontinental ballistic missile tests last month.

The Ulchi Freedom Guardian drills are largely computer-simulated war games held every summer and have drawn furious responses from North Korea, which views them an invasion rehearsal. Pyongyang's state media on Sunday called this year's drills a "reckless" move that could trigger the "uncontrollable phase of a nuclear war."

Despite the threat, U.S. and South Korean militaries launched this year's 11-day training on Monday morning as scheduled. The exercise involves 17,500 American troops and 50,000 South Korean soldiers, according to the U.S. military command in South Korea and Seoul's Defense Ministry.

No field training like live-fire exercise or tank maneuvering is involved in the Ulchi drills, in which alliance soldiers, mostly senior officers, sit at computers to practice how they engage in battles and hone their decision-making capabilities. The allies have said the drills are defensive in nature.

South Korea's President Moon Jae-in said Monday that North Korea must not use the drills as a pretext to launch fresh provocation, saying the training is held regularly because of repeated provocations by North Korea.

North Korea typically responds to South Korea-U.S. military exercises with weapons tests and a string of belligerent rhetoric. During last year's Ulchi drills, North Korea test-fired a submarine-launched ballistic missile that flew about 500 kilometers (310 miles) in the longest flight by that type of weapon. Days after the drills, the North carried out its fifth and biggest nuclear test to date.

Last month North Korea test-launched two ICBMs at highly lofted angles, and outside experts say those missiles can reach some U.S. parts like Alaska, Los Angeles or Chicago if fired at normal, flattened trajectories. Analysts say it would be only a matter of time for the North to achieve its long-stated goal of acquiring a nuclear missile that can strike anywhere in the United States.

Earlier this month, President Donald Trump pledged to answer North Korean aggression with "fire and fury." North Korea, for its part, threatened to launch missiles toward the American territory of Guam before its leader Kim Jong Un backed off saying he would first watch how Washington acts before going ahead with the missile launch plans.

World

Spanish town struggles to reconcile locals as extremist cell

RIPOLL, Spain (AP)—They were brothers and boyhood friends from a town with no unfamiliar faces. They were linked by Moroccan roots and equally tied by their upbringings in Ripoll, an ancient hub in the Catalan foothills known for its monastery and passageways dotted with cafes and kebab shops.

But most recently, police believe, the young men were drawn together by an imam and an alleged plot to murder on a massive scale—an extraordinary secret for 12 people to keep for months on end.

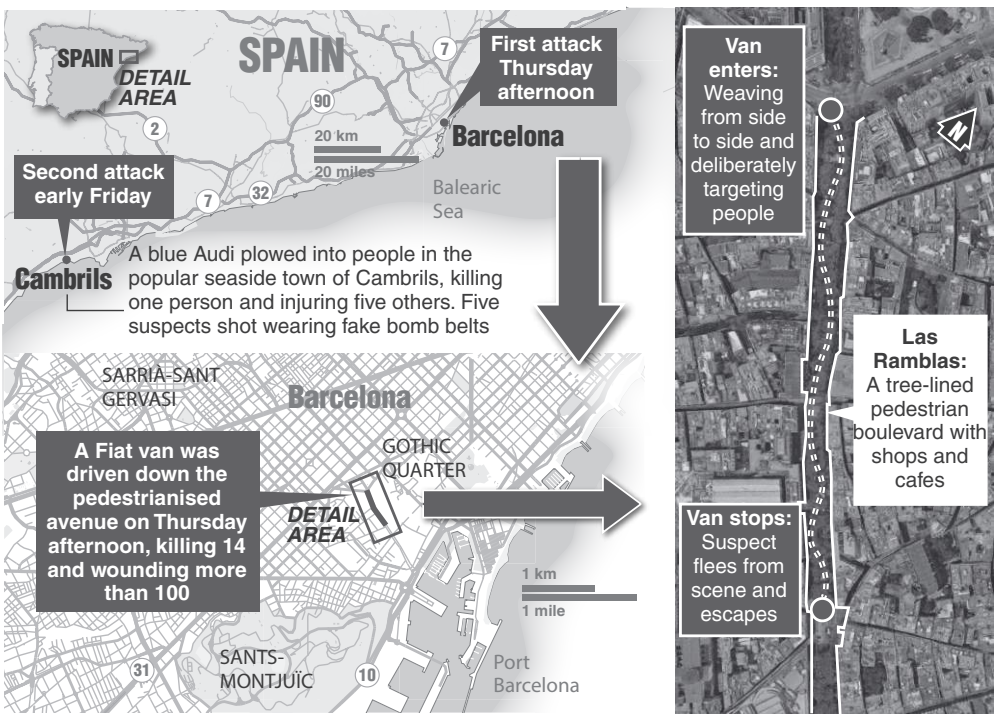
In the suspected extremist cell's final days, the group accumulated more than 100 gas canisters, blew up a house in a botched effort to make bombs, drove a van through Barcelona's storied Las Ramblas promenade, and attacked beachside tourists, Spanish authorities said.

The Islamic State group claimed responsibility for the attacks that killed at least 14 people and left scores wounded. Five of the dozen were shot dead by police.

Now, Ripoll is cut off by police roadblocks as the search for an alleged cell member thought to still be on the run continues. Families and friends in the town are torn between horror at the bloodshed and grief for the children they thought they knew.

Spain attacks hit Barcelona and Cambrils

Spanish authorities said the back-to-back vehicle attacks Thursday afternoon and early Friday morning were related and the work of the Islamic State terrorist group.


SPAIN
DETAIL AREA
SPAIN
First attack Thursday afternoon
Barcelona
20 km
20 miles
Balearic Sea
Second attack early Friday
Cambrils
A blue Audi plowed into people in the popular seaside town of Cambrils, killing one person and injuring five others. Five suspects shot wearing fake bomb belts
SARRIÀ-SANT GERVASI
Barcelona
GOTHIC QUARTER
A Fiat van was driven down the pedestrianised avenue on Thursday afternoon, killing 14 and wounding more than 100
DETAIL AREA
1 km
1 mile
SANTS-MONTJUÏC
Port Barcelona
Van enters: Weaving from side to side and deliberately targeting people
Las Ramblas: A tree-lined pedestrian boulevard with shops and cafes
Van stops: Suspect flees from scene and escapes

Source: AP, BBC, Image: Google Earth Pro

Graphic: Staff, Tribune News Service

"We don't know whether to cry and mourn them or what to do," said Wafa Marsi, who knew the attackers and stood with their weeping mothers as they clustered in small groups in the town square. "They have killed 13 or 14 people and wounded a hundred, and we don't know what to do."

What the families finally did, after fiercely debating the issue, was denounce the attack, some holding up homemade signs reading "Not in our name."

Police have identified 12 members of the cell, but three remained unaccounted for Sunday. Two are believed to have been killed when the house where the plot was hatched exploded Wednesday, Catalan police official Josep Lluis Trapero told reporters Sunday.

Complicating the manhunt for the suspected fugitive and any other possible accomplices, though, was the fact that police so far have been unable to pinpoint who remained at large. The explosion in Alcanar, 300 kilometers (186 miles) south of Ripoll, nearly obliterated the bomb makers along with the house. A police official has said the imam, Abdelbaki Es Satty, is thought to be one of them.

Trapero declined to confirm that Younes Abouyaaquoub, a 22-year-old Moroccan, was the one at large and the suspected driver of the van that plowed down the Las Ramblas promenade Thursday, killing 13 people and injuring 120. Another attack hours later killed one person and injured others in Cambrils, a seaside town south of the city.

"We are working in that line," Trapero said. But he added: "We don't know where he is."

Another police official did confirm that three vans tied to the investigation were rented with Abouyaaquoub's credit card: The one used in the Las Ramblas carnage, another found in Ripoll, where all the main attack suspects lived, and a third found in Vic, on the road between the two.

Police are investigating whether a man found stabbed to death inside a car in Barcelona may have been killed by an attacker as well.

Police believe the cell members had planned to fill the vans with explosives and create a massive attack in the Catalan capital. Trapero confirmed that more than 100 tanks of butane gas were found at the Alcanar house that exploded, as well as ingredients of the explosive TATP, which was used by the Islamic State group in attacks in Paris and Brussels.

"Our thesis is that the group had planned one or more attacks with explosives in the city of Barcelona," he said. The plot was foiled when the house in Alcanar blew up Wednesday night.

None of the 12 had any known history of violent extremism, Spanish police have said.

Trapero confirmed the imam was part of the investigation, but said police had no solid evidence that he was responsible for radicalizing the young men in the cell. Es Satty in June abruptly quit working at a mosque in Ripoll and has not been seen since.

"Don't criminalize the mosques because the overwhelming majority of them are places of worship. They are places where people pray," Trapero said. "In fact, even though there is an imam implicated in the group, it doesn't mean that the mosque is where they were radicalized."

Iraq launches operation to take back IS-held town near Mosul

ABU GHADDUR, Iraq (AP)—U.S.-backed Iraqi forces on Sunday launched a multi-pronged assault to retake the town of Tal Afar, west of Mosul, marking the next phase in the country's war on the Islamic State group.

Tal Afar and the surrounding area is one of the last pockets of IS-held territory in Iraq after victory was declared in July in Mosul, the country's second-largest city. The town, about 150 kilometers (93 miles) east of the Syrian border, sits along a major road that was once a key IS supply route.

"The city of Tal Afar will be liberated and will join all the liberated cities," Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi said in a televised speech early Sunday. He was dressed in a black uniform of the type worn by Iraqi special forces.

He called on the militants to "surrender or die."

By early afternoon, Lt. Gen. Abdul-Amir Rasheed Yar Allah, who commands the operation, said the forces had recaptured a series of villages east, southwest and northwest of town.

The U.S.-led coalition providing air and other support to the troops praised what it said was a "capable, formidable, and increasingly professional force."

"They are well prepared to deliver another defeat" to IS in Tal Afar, like in Mosul, the coalition said in a statement.

On the front lines, pillars of smoke could be seen rising in the distance as U.S. and Belgian special forces worked with Iraqi troops to establish a position on the roof of a house. They later fired mortar rounds and launched drones.

Lt. Gen. Riyad Jalal Tawfiq, of the Iraqi army, said IS had deployed small teams of attackers as well as suicide car bombs and roadside bombs.

The Coalition estimates that approximately 10,000-50,000 civilians remain in and around Tal Afar. In past battles, IS has prevented civilians from fleeing and used them as human shields, slowing Iraqi advances.

Hours after announcing the operation, the United Nations expressed concerns over the safety of the civilians, calling on warring parties to protect them.

Iraqi authorities have set up a toll-free number and a radio station to help guide fleeing civilians to safety.

A stepped up campaign of airstrikes and a troop buildup has already forced tens of thousands to flee Tal Afar, threatening to compound a humanitarian crisis sparked by the Mosul operation.

Some 49,000 people have fled the Tal Afar district since April, according to the United Nations. Nearly a million people remain displaced by the nine-month campaign to retake Mosul.

The U.N. Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, Lise Grande, described the situation inside Tal Afar as "very tough," with food and water running out and many lacking basic necessities.

"Families are trekking for 10 to 20 hours in extreme heat to reach mustering points," she said. "They are arriving exhausted and dehydrated."

Iraqi forces have driven IS from most of the major towns and cities seized by the militants in the summer of 2014, including Mosul, which was retaken after a grueling nine-month campaign.

But along with Tal Afar, the militants are still fully in control of the northern town of Hawija as well as Qaim, Rawa and Ana, in western Iraq near the Syrian border.

Tal Afar has been a stronghold for extremists in Iraq since the 2003 U.S.-led invasion that toppled Saddam Hussein. Many senior leaders of IS and its predecessor, al-Qaida in Iraq, were from Tal Afar.

Iraq's state-sanctioned and mostly Shiite militias largely stayed out of the operation to retake Mosul, a mostly Sunni city about 80 kilometers (50 miles) to the east, but have vowed to play a bigger role in the battle for Tal Afar, which was home to both Sunnis and Shiites, as well as ethnic Turkmen, before it fell to IS, a Sunni extremist group. The militias captured Tal Afar's airport, on the outskirts of the town, last year.

Syria's Assad rejects security cooperation with the West

DAMASCUS, Syria (AP)—Syrian President Bashar Assad on Sunday refused any security cooperation with Western nations or the reopening of their embassies, until they cut ties with opposition and insurgent groups.

Shortly after Assad gave his speech, a shell hit the first international fair in the country since the war began six years ago, killing and wounding several people.

Assad's defiant comments come at a time when his troops and pro-Iranian militiamen are gaining ground across the country under the cover of Russian airstrikes. Many countries have ceased calling for him to step down.

Speaking before dozens of Syrian diplomats in Damascus, Assad praised Russia, Iran, China and Lebanon's Hezbollah for supporting his government during the conflict.

He said Syria will look east when it comes to political, economic and cultural relations.

"The direct support of our friends, politically, economically and militarily, made our advance on the ground greater and the losses of war less. Therefore, they are our partners in these achievements on the road to crush terrorism," Assad said.

"Let's be clear. There will be no security cooperation nor opening of embassies or even a role for some countries that say that they want to play a role in ending the crisis in Syria before they clearly and frankly cut their relations with terrorism," Assad said. "At that point maybe we can speak about opening embassies."

Following months of steady military advances, Syria's government has sought to portray itself as the victor in a war that is winding down, and is looking ahead to reconstruction.

The Syrian president said his country's economy is turning to growth again "at a very slow pace, although we are under an almost complete embargo."

The government had billed the international trade fair, which opened three days ago, as a "victory" and a sign of renewed confidence in the war-torn nation.

The Mortar News in Damascus Facebook page, which tracks violence in the capital, said the shell hit the entrance of the fair, killing four people and wounding four others.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, an opposition-run group that reports on both sides of the conflict, said the shell killed five people and wounded 11 but did not say who was behind the attack.

Focus

In this Monday, June 19, 2017, photo, a boy stands in the aisle at the Potonggang department store in Pyongyang, North Korea. AP

The real revolution in NKorea is rise of consumer culture

PYONGYANG, North Korea (AP)—Like all North Korean adults, Song Un Pyol wears the faces of leader Kim Jong Un's father and grandfather pinned neatly to her left lapel, above her heart. But on her right glitters a diamond-and-gold brooch.

Song is what a success story in Kim Jong Un's North Korea is supposed to look like. Just after Kim assumed power in late 2011, she started managing the supermarket floor at a state-run department store, which has freezers stocked full of pork and beef and rows of dairy, bakery and canned goods. She watches as customers fill their shopping carts, take their groceries directly to be scanned at the checkout counter and pay with cash or bank debit cards.

Song is part of a paradigm shift within North Korea: Three generations into the Kim family's ruling dynasty, markets have blossomed and a consumer culture is taking root. From 120 varieties of "May Day Stadium" brand ice cream to the widespread use of plastic to pay the bills, it's a change visibly and irreversibly transforming her nation.

While Kim has in recent weeks gained attention for his threat to fire missiles near Guam, his trademark two-track policy focuses on the development of both nuclear weapons and the economy. His acceptance of a more consumer-friendly economy is meant to foster economic growth and bring profits into the regime's coffers. But like his pursuit of nuclear weapons, it's a risky business.

Facing even more international sanctions and a flood of Chinese imports that has generated a huge trade imbalance, there are good reasons to believe the North Korean economy is in a bubble that could soon burst. Prices for gasoline imports have soared more than 200 percent in less than six months, the AP has found. The price of rice is also believed to be sharply rising, although harder to independently confirm because of the difficulty in visiting local markets.

The new round of sanctions announced by the U.N. earlier this month will make it harder for the North to export its goods, cap the number of laborers it can send abroad—an important source of foreign currency for the regime—and limit the growth of joint ventures. North Korea will be hit particularly strongly by a Chinese ban on several key products, including coal, iron ore and seafood.

The problem, however, goes deeper than that.

Market forces bring new forms of competition, uncertainty and change that are the antithesis of the centrally controlled, state-run economy of the North Korea of old. Markets are like a genie offering to grant the wish of wealth—but at the potential cost of political instability.

Once the genie has been released from its bottle, it's very hard to put it back in.

GUNS AND BUTTER

The North Korean consumer landscape has evolved dramatically under Kim Jong Un.

In keeping with his father, whose motto was "Military First," Kim devotes nearly a quarter of North Korea's estimated $30 billion GDP to defense spending, which is a far higher military burden than any other country in the world. But his new slogan of "Parallel Development"—guns and butter, so to speak—reflects an inescapable reality of his era:

In the 1990s, North Korea nearly imploded when the Soviet Union and its satellite empire collapsed. Reeling from floods, famine and an overwhelmed bureaucracy, it could no longer afford the public distribution system many North Koreans had depended on for their basic needs. This change sparked a wave of grassroots barter and trade, which has swollen into the burgeoning market economy today.

Life in rural North Korea is still marked by far more hardship and scarcity than in its urban areas, and is hard even to compare to the showcase capital, Pyongyang. Yet there is, surprisingly, a bustling, almost booming, feeling in many parts of the country.

Under a 5-year plan for the economy Kim Jong Un announced last May, North Korean factories are putting a new priority on making more and better daily-life products. Managers, meanwhile, have more freedom to decide what to make, how much to pay their workers and how to forge profitable partnerships.

Along the roads into virtually every city, street vendors, usually weather-beaten old women, sell fruits, vegetables and other food. In the cities, bazaar-style markets, shops and department stores are full of people. The shelves are lined with dozens of brands of domestically made cigarettes, sugary soft drinks and colorfully packaged chips or canned soups.

In specialty shops, the latest "Pyongyang" model smartphones—probably Chinese-made but rebranded to have a locally made appearance—go for $200. Apps to put on them, like the popular "Boy General" role-playing game, are $2 a pop. Pyongyang's premier brewery, Taedonggang, just added an eighth kind of beer to its product line, which already includes beers dark and light, and even one that is chocolatey.

Despite the ever-tightening sanctions, consumer products are still coming in from all over the world. Buying a can of Pokka coffee from Japan is easy, and costs about 80 cents. Purchasing a Mercedes-Benz Viano might require some connections, but it is doable—for a $63,000 sticker price.

On the country's bumpy highways, caravans of cram-packed long-distance buses and trucks hauling goods from city to city are common. More products made in Pyongyang are found in rural areas these days, and vice versa. Although the use of U.S. dollars or Chinese yuan remains widespread, more people are using prepaid cards or local bills at the checkout counter—suggesting greater buying power in general and more confidence in the stability of the national currency.

Some blatant manifestations of commercialism remain taboo. There are only three billboards in Pyongyang, a city of about 3 million. They advertise the local automaker, Pyonghwa Motors, and are more for the benefit of impressing foreign visitors than selling cars. There are no advertisements on television or in the newspapers.

But stores are under instructions to be more consumer-friendly.

"At first, we opened the store from 10 in the morning to 6 in the evening," said Song. "But in 2015, our dear respected Marshal Kim Jong Un made sure that we serve from 10 in the morning to 8 in the evening so one can use late night at any given time, as many working people often used the shop during the evening after work."

Stores now commonly offer buy-two-get-one-free type sales and discounts on products the management wants to move off the shelves. Posters for new medicines or sports drinks can be seen inside shops and customers can sign up for "loyalty cards" to get points toward ever more discounts.

"In today's North Korea there is a growing competition between the domestic companies themselves as they try to attract customers and establish reputable brands," said Michael Spavor, a Canadian entrepreneur and the director of Paektu Cultural Exchange who visits the North frequently and is one of the only Westerners to have ever met Kim Jong Un.

Spavor calls it a "brilliant strategy."

But the emphasis on locally produced consumer goods isn't just because Kim wants to make good on his promise to give his people a higher standard of living.

It's also an attempt to counter the gravitational pull of China.

THE POWER OF CHINA

As sanctions advocates rightly point out, cutting off trade with China would be catastrophic for Pyongyang. But North Korean leaders, including Kim Jong Un himself, have shown a great deal of concern over the flip side of that coin: what might happen to their country if trade continues, or grows even larger.

The expansion of trade increases Chinese leverage on the ground and feeds market forces that are hard for Pyongyang to keep under control. China already accounts for nearly all of North Korea's trade and its fuel. While the North has minimal dealings with the rest of the world, it did $2 billion worth of business with China in the first five months of this year alone.

During Kim Jong Un's first three years in power, North Korea's exports to China of coal, garments, minerals and seafood were all growing. But what North Korea was able to sell to China fell far short of what it needed to buy, particularly because of its need for oil and fuel products.

That imbalance has widened dramatically this year as China cut back on buying from the North. The new U.N. sanctions will further squeeze the North's main sources of export income.

Georgetown University economist William Brown estimates the North is suffering an outflow of $200 million in foreign exchange every month. This is crucial because the more Pyongyang owes Beijing, the less it has to spend on other things. But it still needs essential commodities like food and fuel, which can deepen the problems of both shortages and inflation.

Signs of trouble are already appearing.

Right around April, according to data compiled by the AP, gasoline prices started to soar. Many stations either closed their gates or restricted the amount they would sell each customer. As of late July, the price surge had yet to abate.

Few North Koreans have their own cars. But gasoline, virtually all of which comes from China, fuels the transportation of goods and people in the new economy.

Brown said the price of rice was also up nearly 20 percent in July from May and was significantly higher than a year ago. There could be a trickle-down effect, since tractors and even the fertilizer used to grow rice require petroleum products. Fears of a poor harvest in the fall could send prices shooting up much higher.

"This may represent the greatest near-term threat to the regime stability," Brown said.

See NKOREA on Next Page

Overdrive

AUTO REVIEW:

2018 Lexus LC 500 redefines Lexus style

By MARK PHELAN
DETROIT FREE PRESS

I'm a believer. I remained skeptical for years as Toyota executives vowed their company would become a design leader. No more. The 2018 Lexus LC 500 coupe (I give it three out of four stars) is a triumph, a gorgeous car that elevates its whole brand. Taken alongside the newly styling 2018 Toyota Camry that goes on sale later this year, it establishes Toyota's designers as a group to watch.

The LC 500 coupe isn't just the best-looking Lexus ever, it's a design Porsche or Ferrari would be proud to claim. Flawlessly detailed and beautifully proportioned, the LC's smooth shape appears to have been poured from molten metal rather than built with wrenches and robots.

But for all its beauty, don't mistake the LC for a sports car. It's a grand tourer in the European tradition of cars built to look good and carry a wealthy few in stately opulence. It's fast on the highway, but not an incitement to sporting detours onto twisting country roads.

The LC is almost unique among modern luxury coupes its size. Most of them offer more power and sharper handling for bragging rights, despite their drivers' probably indifference to boy-racer specs.

A less attractive car might not get away with that, but the LC pulls it off. At least in its early days on the road when few people have ever seen one, the LC literally stops pedestrians in their tracks and causes drivers of other luxury cars to slow for a long look and an approving nod.

HOW MUCH?

LC 500 prices start at $92,000 for one with a 471-horsepower 5.0-liter V-8 engine and 10-speed automatic transmission. The LC 500h hybrid model has a 3.5-liter V-6 engine and electric motor for 354 total horsepower, significantly better fuel economy and a $96,510 base price. There's no F-Sport package yet, but it wouldn't be a surprise if Lexus adds one with a few boy racer frills and perhaps a performance upgrade.

I tested a well-optioned LC 500 that had the optional carbon fiber trim package, precollision alert and braking, pedestrian detection, adaptive cruise control, lane-keeping assist, forged aluminum wheels, Torsen limited slip rear differential; Mark Levinson audio; navigation, and more.

The LC 500's competitors include coupes like the Chevrolet Corvette Stingray, Jaguar F-type R AWD, Maserati Gran Turismo Sport, Mercedes SL 550 and Porsche 911 Carrera.

The LC's a bargain compared to most of that group, offering more features for the money than all but the Stingray, which remains a shockingly good value.

STEP INSIDE

The LC's interior is comfortable and accommodating, if you ignore the rear seats. That's easy to do because they offer virtually no leg or head room, and are not even easy to reach into to stash grocery bags or a briefcase. The trunk is also very small, offering just 5.4 cubic feet, less than all the competitors. The trunk opening is wide, but the compartment is very shallow. I recommend soft-sided luggage, and not much of it.

The front seats — let's just call them the seats; friends don't put friends in the back of an LC — are luxurious and comfortable. After a pair of five-hour road trips, I exited the car as fresh and comfortable as I began. My car's optional Alcantara seat inserts and headliner looked and felt good. Head, leg and shoulder room are expansive.

The interior eschews common trim materials like wood and metal for soft covers nearly everywhere you touch, a distinctive and appealing choice by Lexus's design team.

THE DOWNSIDE

The LC's V-8 produces competitive power figures, but the Lexus coupe is hundreds of pounds heavier than most of its competitors. That leads to relatively leisurely acceleration, despite claiming a respectable 0-60 mph time of 4.4 seconds. Response to the accelerator pedal is not linear, initially responding slowly, then coming on in a rush that led me to swing back and forth between slow starts and inadvertent wheel spin at traffic lights.

The instrument displays are large and clear, but the control for many audio and navigation commands is poor. In lieu of a touch screen or even the awkward joy stick Lexus used to use, there's a small touch pad in the center console that's almost impossible to use in a moving vehicle. Automakers test new control systems exhaustively, so I have no idea how the touch pad passed Lexus's inspection; it makes operations that should be simple distracting and difficult.

FACTS AND FIGURES

The LC's V-8's 471 horsepower and 398 pound-feet of torque rank in the middle of the car's competitive set. Combined that with the LC's 4,280-pound base curb weight, however, and the result is the worst power to weight ratio in the bunch.

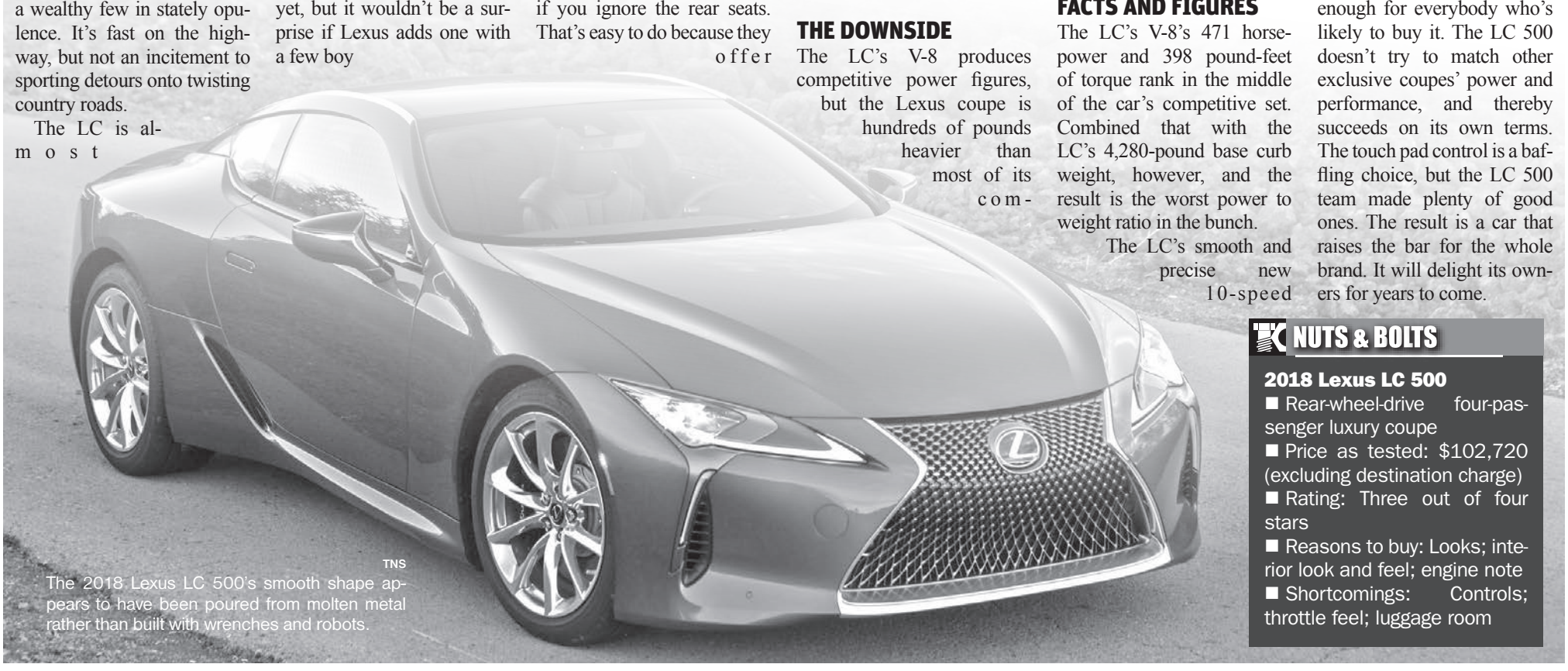
The LC's smooth and precise new 10-speed automatic transmission helps offset that disadvantage, and its excellent programming makes for nearly imperceptible shifts and eliminates the hunting among gears that plagues some transmissions with lots of gears.

The LC's EPA fuel economy rating of 16 mpg in the city, 26 on the highway and 19 combined falls roughly in the middle of its class, matching the Stingray, topping the Gran Turismo Sport and F-Type R AWD, and trailing the SL 550 and base 911 Carrera.

The LC has a magical engine note, rumbling and promising endless acceleration and vast power. It's certain to delight the car's owners and make up for its unexceptional performance and fuel economy.

YEA OR NAY?

The 2018 Lexus LC 500 coupe is beautiful, luxurious and rare, and that will be enough for everybody who's likely to buy it. The LC 500 doesn't try to match other exclusive coupes' power and performance, and thereby succeeds on its own terms. The touch pad control is a baffling choice, but the LC 500 team made plenty of good ones. The result is a car that raises the bar for the whole brand. It will delight its owners for years to come.



TNS

The 2018 Lexus LC 500's smooth shape appears to have been poured from molten metal rather than built with wrenches and robots.

NUTS & BOLTS

2018 Lexus LC 500

- Rear-wheel-drive four-passenger luxury coupe
- Price as tested: $102,720 (excluding destination charge)
- Rating: Three out of four stars
- Reasons to buy: Looks; interior look and feel; engine note
- Shortcomings: Controls; throttle feel; luggage room

NKOREA

From Page 17

North Korea has proven it is nothing if not resilient, often finding a way out of its economic problems. Even so, the longer-term changes to society won't be easy to address.

The goods and trading opportunities spilling across the Chinese border are also spurring the growth of profitable enterprises, which has substantial financial benefits for well-connected individuals and, at least initially, the regime's elite. For this tier of North Korean society—and for farmers who can profit from their excess produce—the new economy has opened up a way to get money from sometimes under-the-table businesses.

Loyalty to the regime and party ties remain an important means of social advancement. But, in Kim Jong Un's North Korea these days, so is a good sense for how to run a proper side hustle to augment what are often paltry official paychecks.

However, the same opportunities have widened the gap between the rich by North Korean standards and the poor. The haves benefit disproportionately from the new economy, while a far larger number of have-nots live mostly outside the Pyongyang bubble of affluence. Ambiguity over what officials will overlook and what they will strictly enforce has also created a gray area that opens the door to corruption and bribery.

ARE STATE GOODS GOOD ENOUGH?

The regime is not blind to what's happening. It knows the new consumerism can be a destabilizing force. But it also knows it needs the markets.

North Korean officials insist markets are a stopgap coping measure for the economy that will be overcome. Kang Chol Min, a researcher with the Economics Institute of the Academy of Social Science, said the regime is trying to produce more, and better, goods to woo consumers away from the markets and back to state-run businesses.

"The number of people relying on the state-run commercial networks is increasing," he said in an interview with AP Television News.

But many outside experts believe state enterprises and farms are too inefficient to provide enough goods and services for the whole nation without the help of markets and private activities.

If they are right, it's hard to imagine North Korea's economic future will lie in Kang's vow to produce more goods locally. Nor is it likely to be model worker Song, the state-sanctioned success story.

It might, however, be a Miniso store.

Miniso is decidedly not trying to appeal to the shoppers by filling its shelves with products made in North Korea. It's an international brand name—found in Hong Kong, Tokyo, Sydney—selling bargain-priced goods such as backpacks and consumer electronics. Its Pyongyang store just opened in April, near two of the capital's most prestigious universities in a newly built high-rise district appropriately called Ryomyong Gori, the "Avenue of Dawn."

It's the trendiest shop in town.

And it's a joint venture. With China.

Life & Style

Legendary Jerry Lewis knew how to laugh and cry

NEW YORK (AP)—Jerry Lewis sometimes didn't know whether to laugh or cry.

"There's nothing more dramatic than the comedy I've done," Lewis, who died Sunday at age 91, told The Associated Press in 2016. "Because the comedy I've done is to get to the audience, get them to feel it, or they won't laugh."

If jokes are the children of pain, then Lewis was a born patriarch. The filmmaker, entertainer and sleepless host of the Muscular Dystrophy telethons was a storm system of rage and ecstasy, Olympian physical talent, artistic aspiration and vintage Vegas schmaltz. The crazed funnyman who would scream like a toddler worked on a Holocaust film called "The Day the Clown Cried" and for his theme song chose the self-mythology of Rodgers and Hammerstein's "You'll Never Walk Alone":

Walk on through the wind
Walk on through the rain
Though your dreams be tossed and blown
Walk on, walk on
With hope in your heart

In this Sunday, Feb. 22, 2009, file photo, Jerry Lewis accepts the Jean Hersholt Humanitarian Award by the Board of Governors of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences during the Oscars telecast during the 81st Academy Awards, in the Hollywood section of Los Angeles. AP

And you'll never walk alone

Some comedians are always in character. Don Rickles, who died in April, stayed true in public to his persona of good-natured insulter. With Lewis, you never knew when he might switch from sad to funny to angry to reflective. He might lash out an audience member during one of his nightclub performances or chastise a gathering at the Friars Club in New York for not cheering loud enough for one his fellow entertainers. He might glare in response to a reporter's question, give a long and thoughtful response or tell an unprintable joke.

Lewis believed in truth, and part of his truth was darkness. He once bragged that he told gossip columnist Louella Parsons she was "a fat pig."

"You see the people that have a point of view, and have an opinion and have some intellect are dangerous in the film community, they're dangerous," he told Larry King during a 2000 interview on CNN. "You want to know why Barbra Streisand is so difficult? Because she's brilliant. She's a brilliant entertainer, she's a brilliant lady, and she's a wonderful human being, and the community doesn't like it."

Lewis was born into a world of vaudeville and silent movies and carried with him decades of 20th century show business. He was a final link to the old Borsch Belt culture that also turned out Mel Brooks and Henny Youngman, to the nightclub circuit where entertainers such as himself, Frank Sinatra and his old partner Dean Martin got their starts, and to the early years of Las Vegas when Lewis helped shape the city's brand of glitz and sentimentality.

Lewis was equally memorable talking too much or saying nothing. As the French seemed to know better than anyone, he was among the last comedians who modeled their work after Charlie Chaplin, Buster Keaton and the greats of the silent era.

IN CELEBRATION OF HIS NEW LIFE

Henry John Yorofalpiy

MAY 15, 1956 – AUGUST 13, 2017

In his new life, he joins his:

Wife: † Bernadita Rasiang Limes Yarofalpiy
Parents: † Pius (Papa) Mau Piailug
† Cathrina Nemaito
In-Laws: † Benedicto Angailen Limes
† Margarita Rogolifoi Limes

Brothers and Sisters:
† Francisco Piailum
† Luis Racheilum
† Luisa Leiwimal
† Peter Sarumai
† Stanley Tiwseoman

He is survived by his:
Daughter: Geralene Laurlam Limes Yarofalpiy
and grandson Lincoln Drake Aitawer Yarofalpiy Saures

Brothers and Sisters:
Augustin Eraumai, Carmen, Antonio Urmeyong Piailug Plasido Eselugupi, Kristina, Rosina, Sesario Sewralur, Martha, Bernard, Halora, Asterio Tawanpiy

Common-law Wife: Rita Reyes-Fitial and adopted son Enfino Pialbul Reyes Yarofalpiy

Daily Christian Mass will be said on Monday, August 20 2017 to Tuesday, August 29, 2017 at the Kristo Rai Church at 6:00 a.m.

Your PRAYERS are greatly appreciate.
Ghilissow yan Si Yu'us Ma'asi, Thank you.

IN CELEBRATION OF HIS NEW LIFE

Levy Nicolas C. Villegas

November 12, 1941 – August 09, 2017

In his new life, he now joins his:

Father: Silvino Belarmino Villegas
Mother: Ester Centeno Villegas
Wife: Juliet L. Villegas
Sister: Remedios Villegas
Sister: Nomelia Lopez
Sister: Susan Gonzales
Granddaughter: Maria Lourdes V. Bautista
Grandson: Dustin D.P. Villegas

His memories will forever live in the hearts of his:

Siblings:
William Villegas
Ellen Dowson
Annie Villegas
Marie Tobias

Children & their Spouses:
Warren & Marylou Villegas
Leah V. & Romel Besmonte
Malou & Arnel Bautista
Jenalyn Villegas
Joel & Cora Villegas
Haydn & Ana Maria Villegas
Niccolevy & Catherine Villegas
Diane Villegas & Vincent Mettao
Errol Villegas
Lani Bautista

Grandchildren:
Christian Dior, Kimberly, Aemir, Kershey, Rowell, Mark Rodel, Nicca Leimel, Jay Jeward, Rene, Emmanuel James, Nathan Daniel, Shanne, Gwenn, Daylinne, Clyde, Sidney, Ryvan, Justin, Alyssa, Haidie Marie, Keesha, Nicole, Brian, Anthony, Vianny, Jerome, Connie, Eleazir, Julianne, Vincent Jr., Ina, Abbie Jane, Mikko

Great-Grandchildren:
Tianna Jo, Zayden, Zhion, Juliet, Lean Roi, Kathlyn Jo, Drhyckz, Leinard Casey Mischa, Kech Smaby, Anastacia Elaine, Ignaxious Perris, Samantha Miel, Savannah Faith, Prince Jay, Gabielle, Eva Mae, AnnaMolly, Josaiah Kai, Keoni Jovani, Keagan Jade

Daily Mass of Intentions are being offered every morning at 6:00 a.m. at Mt Carmel Cathedral. On Friday, August 25, 2017, viewing will be held at Mt. Carmel Cathedral at 9:00 a.m. followed by Mass of Christian Burial at 10:00 a.m. Refreshments will be provided during the viewing.

THE FAMILY

Charlie Cox, Finn Jones on 2 Marvel-ous 'Defenders' roles

NEW YORK (AP)—Maybe you know them as Iron Fist and Daredevil. But now Finn Jones and Charlie Cox, who star as these Marvel superheroes on the Netflix series "Iron Fist" and "Daredevil," have joined forces with Mike Colter ("Luke Cage") and Krysten Ritter ("Jessica Jones") for a much-awaited miniseries hybrid.

"The Defenders," which finds this Fab Four uniting to fight a fearsome conspiracy mounted against New York City, is now available on Netflix .

Jones continues as Danny Rand, co-CEO of Rand Enterprises who, now a Buddhist monk and martial arts master, has the ability to call upon the mystical power of the Iron Fist as his alter ego. The first season of "Iron First" was released earlier this year on Netflix. Cox is Matt Murdock, a blind lawyer whose remaining senses are dramatically enhanced and who, for two seasons of his Netflix series, has wrestled with his lawless dark side, the vigilante Daredevil. Both series are continuing.

This Wednesday, Aug. 16, 2017 photo shows actors Charlie Cox and Finn Jones in New York. Cox stars as Daredevil and Jones stars as Iron Fist in the Netflix series, "The Defenders."

But this week Jones and Cox joined forces to talk about "The Defenders" and being part of this eight-episode joint venture.

COX: "I'm not sure this has been done before, where you've got four individual series, four characters who have their own shows, teaming up for a miniseries. It's a process we had known about for a long time, so it felt like a celebration. We were ready for it and excited to see how it would turn out."

JONES: "When we started to play off each other it really felt natural, because all the prep work had been in place for a number of years. All of us had a background in having to lead one of these shows by ourself, so there was a level of support. We were like soldiers in the trenches, which was cool."

The two actors were asked if a grounding in the four "solo" series is a prerequisite for viewers to sign on for "The Defenders."

COX: "I do think it's made primarily for the fans of the other shows. A lot of the enjoyment is going to be had by a fan base that appreciates the other shows and gets to enjoy what it's like to witness the characters' dynamics and relationships. But hopefully it can be enjoyed by anyone."

As for newcomers who want to sample the "Defenders'" predecessors, be advised: Each of the four has its own distinct personality.

COX: "Marvel has a variety of shows which all have the superhero element. But they're all completely different genres. 'Jessica Jones' is a psychological thriller. 'Daredevil' is a crime drama. The superhero element is something sprinkled on top as kind of a garnish."

Asked their level of involvement with the comic book world and the Marvel Cinematic Universe before stepping into their respective Netflix series, both stars replied in unison:

COX: "Zero."

JONES: "Zero."

COX: "When you come to this having not had any real experience with these characters or these comics, you have to look at it from a slightly different angle: Maybe bringing fresh eyes to it will be beneficial. I felt a little bit detached from the history of it, and I could look at the comics and the scripts and find a character that was specific rather than trying to please everyone."

JONES: "First and foremost, they're human beings, and second to that, they're people with powers. When I took on this character, I wasn't like, 'What's his powers?' I was like, 'What are his struggles? What are his vulnerabilities?' That's what makes the character."

COX: "But these characters have been read and beloved for years, and it's important to a lot of people that we get it right. So I feel a great level of responsibility. When it does work out, and when the fan base appreciates the work, that's a gratifying experience."

French designer in costly dispute over Pitt-Jolie chateau

PARIS (AP)—A French lighting designer has won a $600,000 court ruling in a dispute with Brad Pitt over the re-design of the chateau in Provence that he and Angelina Jolie shared. But designer Odile Soudant isn't stopping there.

Soudant says her business went under and her career was irreparably damaged because of Pitt's refusal to pay for costly architectural reveries. She's now fighting for the intellectual property rights to the Chateau Miraval's lighting design.

Pitt's representatives argue the project was late and overbudget and the disputed lighting design was Pitt's brainchild—not hers.

Soudant's legal actions are the latest challenge for Pitt, who is in protracted divorce proceedings with Jolie.

Chateau Miraval is a symbol of happier times in the couple's relationship. They stayed at the sprawling 17th century estate when she gave birth to their twins in nearby Monaco in 2008, launched a successful wine venture from its rich vineyards, and married there in 2014.

Soon after they bought Miraval, nestled in the rolling, wooded hills near the village of Correns, Pitt sought out designers to re-envision it for the 21st century. Soudant and her company, Lumieres Studio, were tasked with the lighting, notably taking better advantage of the sunshine in Provence, she told The Associated Press. She called natural light an "obsession" with Pitt.

Unusually, she says she never supplied or was given a contract.

"I had unlimited time and unlimited budget....They said, 'If you ask for more, we'll give you more."

A representative for Pitt contests this, and says there was an agreement that Soudant didn't respect. The representative requested anonymity because of the sensitivity of the legal process, would not say if the agreement was written or oral.

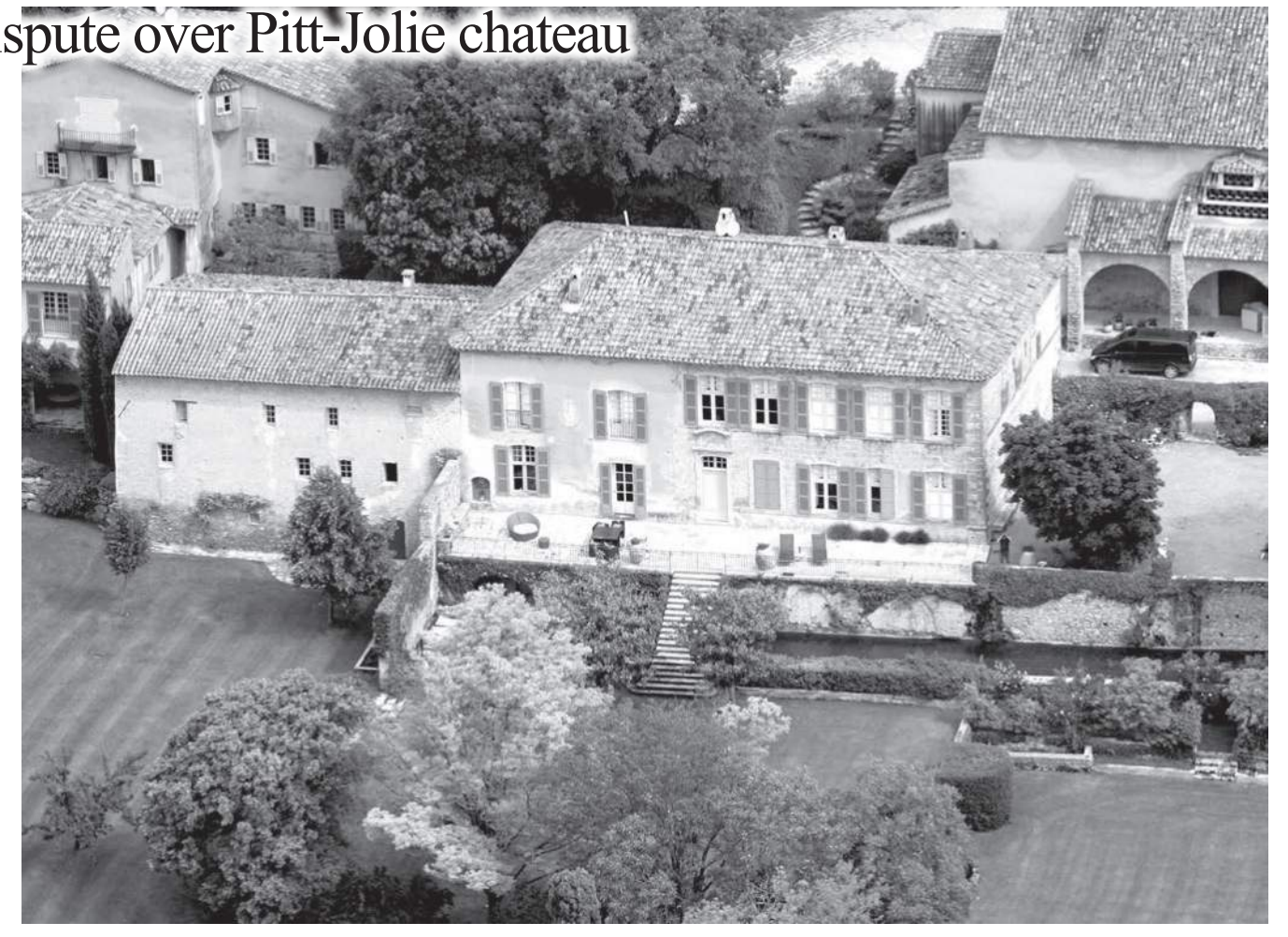
The renovation project grew with "delirious demands" from Pitt and more and more designers getting involved, Soudant said. She hired new staff and relegated her company's other projects to bottom priority.

She says she had 17 employees working exclusively on the lighting for Miraval at one point.

After 3 ½ years of work, the chateau stopped paying Soudant for her services, she said. Her staff continued working on the project, she says, and her bills started piling up, notably for government payroll charges.

Soudant contends she later discovered that Pitt was concerned with the project's price. "One day he wakes up and decides he has paid too much," she said.

Pitt's representative said Soudant was paid more than 4 million euros ($4.7 million) for work she didn't complete; Soudant says the figure is inflated, that every hour worked and piece of material used was financially tracked, and that no one explained the stopped payments.



This May 31, 2008 file photo, shows the Miraval property in Correns, near Brignoles, southern France, Saturday, May 31, 2008. AP

"They sank my business," she said in an interview.

Facing potential bankruptcy, the designer sent a warning letter. In response, she says she received a threatening email from Pitt saying friends don't sue friends, and she was barred from the chateau.

Pitt's spokesperson said Soudant didn't get along with others working on the renovation and her presence "disturbed the work."

Legal proceedings ensued, and in April, the Paris court of appeals ordered Chateau Miraval to pay 565,000 euros ($660,000) to Soudant, including 300,000 euros in unpaid bills and 60,000 euros for damage to her image and reputation. Pitt was not a party to the proceedings, though central to the dispute.

Pitt's representative said the actor's team felt the court decision was fair. Chateau Miraval and its French lawyer refused to discuss the case, referring all queries to Pitt's spokesperson.

Soudant welcomed the ruling, but said it doesn't go far enough to cover her financial or reputational losses.

"I gave up everything to accept the work at Miraval," she.

Because Pitt considers the lighting his intellectual property, Soudant says she can't include the Miraval work in her company's portfolio. She started legal procedures this month seeking to establish her property rights.

"It's my work, my creations. It's like they cut off my arm," she said.

Pitt's team appears serene about the risk of a new trial. His representative said the star was closely involved in Miraval's renovation and has "personal drawings showing that many of the ideas regarding light installations came from him."

'The Hitman's Bodyguard' outdoes 'Logan Lucky' at box office

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Critics loved "Logan Lucky" and gave a big collective shrug to "The Hitman's Bodyguard," but when it came to the test of the marketplace, audiences went their own way.

The two action flicks faced off this weekend, and "The Hitman's Bodyguard" emerged the victor with a chart-topping $21.6 million, according to studio estimates Sunday, while "Logan Lucky" sputtered on arrival with $8.1 million.

Both had notable stars, "Logan Lucky" has Channing Tatum and Daniel Craig, while "The Hitman's Bodyguard" boasts Ryan Reynolds and Samuel L. Jackson, both were opening in over 3,000 theaters and both cost around $30 million to produce. Also, both were targeted toward adults, although one was R-rated ("Hitman's Bodyguard") and one PG-13 ("Logan Lucky").

But when it came to reviews, critics vastly preferred "Logan Lucky," which boasts a "fresh" 93 percent Rotten Tomatoes score, while "The Hitman's Bodyguard" rests at a "rotten" 39 percent. And yet, when presented with the choice, audiences on the whole put their dollars toward "The Hitman's Bodyguard." Even the CinemaScore was flipped with "The Hitman's Bodyguard" earning a B+ and "Logan Lucky" a B—neither of which, it should be noted, is particularly promising for future word of mouth.

"It was a battle of the action ensemble cast movies. Audiences looked at these two action movies in the marketplace and made a decision," said Paul Dergarabedian, a senior media analyst for comScore. "I think for audiences they're just looking for the fun of it ... ("The Hitman's Bodyguard") was critic proof. It provided a perfect escape."

Lionsgate, which distributed "The Hitman's Bodyguard," expects the film to play well into September.

While it's not an all-out flop, the stakes were a little higher for "Logan Lucky." The NASCAR heist pic was not only director Steven Soderbergh's big return to movies after a four-year retirement, but meant to also upend the traditional distribution model with crafty filmmaker-driven know how, independent financing, foreign and streaming service sales and a more concentrated and cheaper marketing push.

AP

This image released by Lionsgate shows Samuel L. Jackson, left, and Ryan Reynolds in "The Hitman's Bodyguard."

An $8.1 million debut from over 3,000 screens, however, isn't enough to make a game-changing splash. In fact, it's Soderbergh's lowest wide-opening since his "Solaris" remake, which opened to $6.8 million in 2002. "Solaris" did have a higher production budget than "Logan Lucky's" though.

Prior to the film's release, Soderbergh told The Associated Press that he was prepared for any scenario.

"At least we got to do it the way we wanted to do it," he said.

Dergarabedian posited that the limited exposure for Soderbergh and the producers means that "Logan Lucky" could still be a winning endeavor, despite coming in behind the horror holdover "Annabelle: Creation," which earned $15.5 million in its second weekend.

In fourth place was Christopher Nolan's "Dunkirk," one of the summer's bigger successes, with $6.7 million, which bumped its domestic total to $165.5 million. And there were a few milestones too: The buddy comedy "Girls Trip" sailed past the $100 million mark domestically, and "Wonder Woman" crossed $800 million worldwide.

But overall the box office is still losing. As of this weekend, comScore estimates that the summer season is down 13 percent from last year, and the year as a whole is down 5 percent.

"The deficit keeps going up. We're limping towards the finish line with one leg dragging behind," Dergarabedian said. "It's not a great place to be."

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to comScore. Where available, the latest international numbers for Friday through Sunday are also included. Final domestic figures will be released Monday.

1. **"The Hitman's Bodyguard,"** $21.6 million ($6.6 million international).
2. **"Annabelle: Creation,"** $ 15.5 million ($42 million international).
3. **"Logan Lucky,"** $8.1 million ($825,000 international).
4. **"Dunkirk,"** $6.7 million ($8.4 million international).
5. **"Nut Job 2: Nutty by Nature,"** $5.1 million ($950,000 international).
6. **"The Emoji Movie,"** $4.4 million ($11.5 million international).
7. **"Spider-Man: Homecoming,"** $4.3 million ($5 million international).
8. **"Girls Trip,"** $3.8 million ($1 million international).
9. **"The Dark Tower,"** $3.7 million ($7.5 million international).
10. **"Wind River,"** $3 million.

Germany welcomes release of writer sought by Turkey

BERLIN (AP)—Germany welcomed the release Sunday of a German writer detained in Spain on a Turkish warrant and accused Turkey of abusing the international system used to hunt down fugitives.

Turkish-born writer Dogan Akhanli, who has German citizenship, was arrested Saturday while on holiday in southern Spain. Akhanli was conditionally released after a court hearing Sunday, but ordered to remain in Madrid while Turkey's extradition request is considered, his lawyer said.

It wasn't immediately clear what Akhanli is accused of, but the author has in the past written about the mass killing of Armenians in Turkey in 1915. The killings are a sensitive subject in Turkey, which rejects the widespread view that they constituted genocide.

In a statement, German Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel praised Akhanli's release and said "it would be terrible if Turkey could get people who raise their voice against (Turkish President Recep Tayyip) Erdogan imprisoned on the other side of Europe."

"I have complete faith in Spain's judicial system and know that our friends and partners in the Spanish government understand what's at stake," Gabriel said.

Erdogan hit back while speaking to supporters in Istanbul, attributing Ankara's souring relations with Berlin to next month's German election and warning Germany to "mind its own business."

German Chancellor Angela Merkel said the arrest of Akhanli was wrong.

"We mustn't abuse international organizations like Interpol for this," she told German broadcaster RTL.

The already high tensions between the two countries hit another peak on Friday when Erdogan said all of Germany's mainstream parties were enemies of Turkey and urged Turkish-Germans to not vote for them in the upcoming election.

Katy Perry changes tour dates due to 'production delays'

NEW YORK (AP)—Katy Perry says she's pushing back the start of her new tour because of "unavoidable production delays."

The pop star's "Witness: The Tour" will now begin Sept. 19 in Montreal. Perry said in a statement Thursday that "major elements of my tour stage design could not be available for me to rehearse on until this week."

The tour was originally planned to kick off Sept. 7 in Columbus, Ohio. Tickets purchased for the original concert dates will be honored at its new date. Refunds are also available at point of purchase.

Perry said that she's "sorry for any inconvenience this causes."

The singer also announced that Carly Rae Jepsen, Noah Cyrus and Purity Ring will open for her on the road.

Family's tolerance of verbal abuse is red flag for girlfriend

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

DEAR ABBY: My boyfriend and I have been together for almost a year and a half. In the beginning, he kept his family and me apart. I thought it was because they were extremely close, but turns out he was doing me a favor given their inappropriate and cruel treatment of one another.

At my boyfriend's birthday lunch, his father called his mother the worst possible word anyone could call a female. My boyfriend and his sisters didn't seem fazed by his verbal abuse. I worry his parents' toxic and unloving relationship is something he will eventually settle for in life. Is it possible for children not to emulate their parents' example, or should I move on?

NOT IN THE FAMILY

DEAR NOT IN THE FAMILY: Children do not automatically follow the abysmal patterns set by their parents. However, if you and this man are serious and you are contemplating a future with him, I strongly recommend that before formalizing your relationship, you seek premarital counseling together to avoid any unpleasant surprises.

DEAR ABBY: I have a question about nail-biting/finger chewing. We recently hired a new employee who is in daily contact with the public. He is a finger chewer, and his nails are bitten well below the finger tip. I am struggling with this because I had a childhood friend who chewed her fingers to the point of bleeding, and I have a strong negative reaction when I see people do it.

When, if ever, is it appropriate to speak to someone about this bad habit? I have recently learned that it is actually a medical diagnosis and can lead to gastric disorders. We all know there are many germs on our hands, and every time you put them in your mouth, you're transferring them to your intestinal tract.

WORRIED IN THE EAST

DEAR WORRIED: I have heard of very few nail-biters who are proud of the habit. There's a saying—not original —that if you want someone to avoid you, just tell him something "for his own good." If you want a pleasant working relationship with this person, mind your own business and do not attempt to "help" him by offering unasked-for advice.

DEAR ABBY: I'm usually well-spoken and articulate with family and close friends. But when talking to strangers or potential employers, I tend to choke up and make no sense at all. I become anxious and forget what I want to say. Do you have any ideas why this happens?

TALKER IN THE WEST

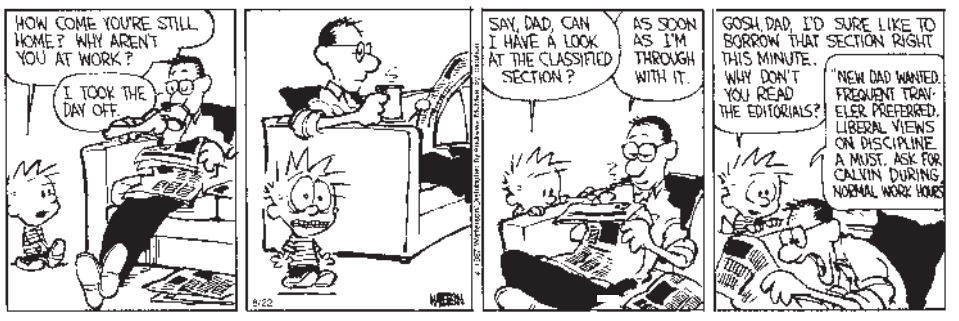
DEAR TALKER: It may happen because you suffer from a form of social anxiety—one shared by many people. Fortunately, there's help for it if you consult a mental health professional. Because it is interfering with employment opportunities, you shouldn't wait.

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

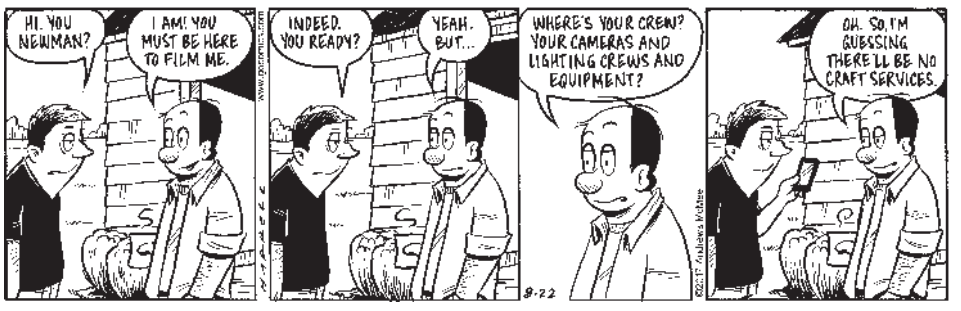

HOW COME YOU'RE STILL HOME? WHY AREN'T YOU AT WORK?
I TOOK THE DAY OFF.
SAY, DAD, CAN I HAVE A LOOK AT THE CLASSIFIED SECTION?
AS SOON AS I'M THROUGH WITH IT.
GOSH, DAD, I'D SURE LIKE TO BORROW THAT SECTION RIGHT THIS MINUTE. WHY DON'T YOU READ THE EDITORIALS?
"NEW DAD WANTED. FREQUENT TRAVELER PREFERRED. LIBERAL VIEWS ON DISCIPLINE A MUST. ASK FOR CALVIN DURING NORMAL WORK HOURS"

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

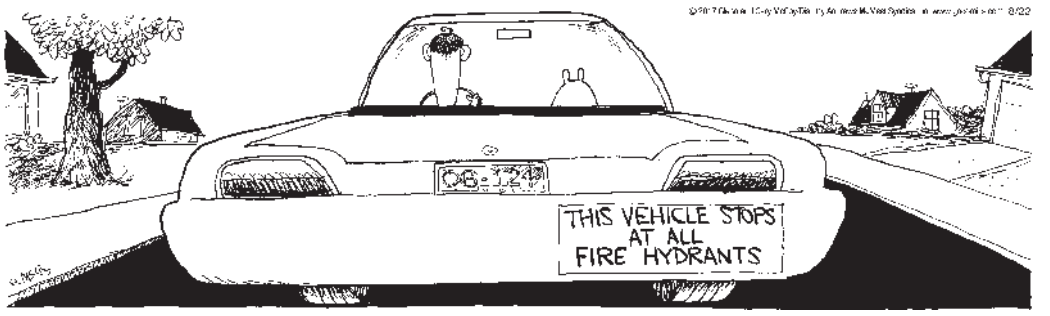
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


HI. YOU NEWMAN?
I AM! YOU MUST BE HERE TO FILM ME.
INDEED. YOU READY?
YEAH. BUT...
WHERE'S YOUR CREW? YOUR CAMERAS AND LIGHTING CREWS AND EQUIPMENT?
OH. SO, I'M GUESSING THERE'LL BE NO CRAFT SERVICES.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

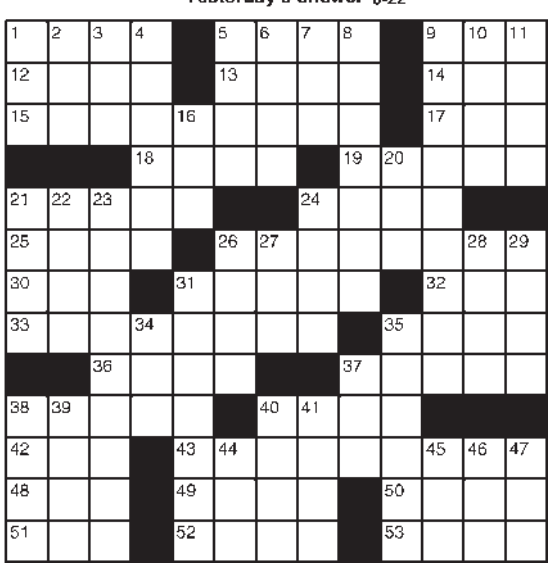
ACROSS
1 Biting remark
5 Tide type
9 June honoree
12 Goya's duchess
13 Slugger Moises
14 French "yes"
15 Woman of TV's Hazzard County
17 Away from SSW
18 Barking mammal
19 Borscht base
21 Moisten
24 Ran in the wash
25 Aspiring atty.'s exam
26 Bamboozles
30 Klutz
31 Uses an egg-beater
32 Bond rating
33 Rude fools
35 Jack Horner's prize
36 Days gone by
37 Bridal path
38 Cuba's Castro
40 Foundered
42 Baton Rouge sch.
43 "Act now!"
48 Env. insert
49 Lummox
50 The Eternal City
51 Stir-fry pan
52 Meditative practice
53 Trade

DOWN
1 Abysmal
2 Carte lead-in
3 Slugger's stat
4 Long-eared hound
5 Zilch
6 Hebrew month
7 Fine, to NASA
8 Adobe dwellings
9 Completed transactions
10 Pop's sister
11 Conks out
16 Evergreen tree
20 "A spider!"
21 Amorphous sci-fi villain
22 Jacob's twin
23 Looney Tunes fowl
24 Conks on the head
26 Loafer, for one
27 Diarist Anaïs
28 Actor Julia
29 "Ditto"
31 Sophisticated
34 Nemesis
35 Tightwads
37 Moreover
38 Soared
39 "Money — object"
40 Comfy-cozy
41 "— girl!"
44 Tic-tac-toe win
45 Blue
46 Docs' org.
47 "Uh-huh"

Solution time: 22 mins.

E	R	A	S	■	A	D	J	■	R	E	B	S
P	E	C	K	A	B	O	■	I	G	E	T	■
A	C	R	I	M	O	N	Y	■	A	G	R	A
■	■	■	C	O	Y	■	O	O	L	O	N	G
P	J	M	A	S	■	H	U	R	T	■	■	■
S	L	A	P	■	C	A	S	C	O	N	Y	■
A	N	I	■	T	E	S	L	A	■	C	U	R
■	A	N	T	H	O	N	Y	■	T	C	M	B
■	■	■	W	I	L	T	■	L	A	N	A	I
I	C	P	F	S	O	■	D	O	T	■	■	■
O	D	I	E	■	G	L	U	T	T	O	N	Y
L	E	N	T	■	I	S	O	T	O	P	E	S
A	H	I	S	■	C	D	S	■	O	H	A	L

Yesterday's answer 8-22



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955!** 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: James Corden, 39; Kristen Wiig, 44; Ty Burrell, 50; Valerie Harper, 78.

Happy Birthday: Finish what you start. Put time and energy into building better relationships with your friends, siblings and colleagues. Concentrate on your interests in life and how best to enhance what you already have. Aim to live within your means and to focus on making financial gains and lifestyle changes that will give you greater leeway to take advantage of new opportunities. Your numbers are 7, 18, 20, 24, 32, 40, 44.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Make your input count. You can get ahead if you show dedication and are willing to go the extra mile. Refuse to let anyone steal your glory or take credit for the work you do. Aim to make a lasting impression. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Gather information that will help you better relate to your peers or colleagues. Greater involvement in activities that require teamwork will give you a sense of unity and belonging. Your input will be valued and collaboration will pay off. ✪✪✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Hard work, taking action and following through with your promises and plans will help you avoid criticism and complaints. Pick and choose who you help carefully. Not everyone will be worthy of the time, effort and wisdom you offer. ✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* A day trip or spending time with someone you look up to or can learn from is encouraged. Handle important partnerships with diplomacy. Charm will get you what you want, and moodiness will lead to a stalemate. Avoid stubbornness. ✪✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Keep your thoughts clear and be precise when dealing with others. There is no room for misunderstandings that leave you vulnerable. Patience and practicality will be your ticket to getting what you want. Stick to your budget. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Share your feelings and find out where you stand. Don't feel like you have to do what others want you to do. Fight for equality and recognize that you have as much right as anyone else to pursue your interests, goals and beliefs. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Protect your personal secrets, passwords and feelings. Don't be fooled by fast talk. Concentrate on what you can do to improve your surroundings, environment or status. Reconnect with someone you have worked with in the past. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Your perspective and insight will be accurate, so don't let someone lead you astray using fast talk or a pushy attitude. Keep doing things your way and you will stand out for your effort, creativity and reliability. ✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Emotions will flare up if you let someone manipulate you. Less talk and more action will make others be reluctant to get in your way. A short trip or educational pursuit will help you get ahead. Be proactive. ✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Be selective when dealing with relationships, information or physical concerns. Making the best choice for you or someone you love will be difficult due to changing circumstances. Aim for stability and make decision based on facts. ✪✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* If you feel you need a change, make it happen. Put in the time and effort required to gather information and crunch numbers. Embrace a challenge. Proceed with confidence and be proud of your accomplishments. Celebrate with someone you love. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* A partnership will be on shaky ground if one or both of you refuse to recognize the problems that exist. Be willing to compromise and be open to discussions. Strive for equality and don't offer more than you can handle. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are sensitive, creative and generous. You are persistent and resourceful.

Eugenia's websites — eugenialast.com for Ask Eugenia, daily timing and compatibility services, and join Eugenia on twitter/facebook/linkedin.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

		9		3		5		
	3		7		4		2	
7								4
	4		2		5		8	
3				4				9
	5		9		3		6	
5								7
	8		3		9		1	
		6		5		9		

Difficulty Level ★★ 8/22

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

1	8	6	3	9	2	7	4	5
9	3	5	6	4	7	2	8	1
2	7	4	5	1	8	9	3	6
7	5	1	9	3	4	8	6	2
6	9	2	7	8	1	4	5	3
8	4	3	2	6	5	1	9	7
3	6	7	8	2	9	5	1	4
4	2	9	1	5	3	6	7	8
5	1	8	4	7	6	3	2	9

Difficulty Level ★ 8/21

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISORS Solution: 6 letters

E	T	S	U	R	T	N	E	D	I	S	E	R	P	F
P	N	O	L	L	I	D	A	N	D	E	R	S	O	N
R	I	A	H	C	P	O	S	E	M	A	J	R	W	F
E	K	F	L	W	W	S	A	N	D	Y	E	A	E	R
S	S	S	E	R	S	E	R	V	E	I	L	Y	R	A
E	N	R	U	I	A	E	I	J	G	T	A	R	Y	N
N	I	H	O	S	R	F	Y	N	O	H	T	N	A	K
T	Z	L	E	S	A	B	C	C	G	N	L	E	R	I
L	E	V	E	L	I	N	E	M	U	I	E	H	G	S
W	Z	Ⓝ	Ⓐ	Ⓛ	Ⓟ	V	R	R	T	T	B	S	N	S
O	R	E	V	I	E	W	D	I	G	R	L	Z	O	I
T	B	I	C	C	U	L	R	A	C	E	E	E	D	N
S	C	O	W	C	R	O	F	T	N	E	R	B	R	G
O	L	A	K	E	C	I	F	F	O	L	A	V	O	E
R	M	R	E	T	N	E	M	N	R	E	V	O	G	R

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Advisor, Aide, Anderson, Anthony, Berger, Brent, Brief, Brzezinski, Carlucci, Chair, Cutler, Dillon, Foreign, Frank, Gordon, Government, Gray, Help, Henry, James, Jones, Kissinger, Lake, Level, Office, Oval, Plan, Power, Present, President, Review, Robert McFarlane, Rostow, Sandy, Scowcroft, Serve, Susan Rice, Term, Trust, Walt, Zbigniew

Yesterday's Answer: Loch Ness Monster

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Northern Marianas Humanities Council
Navigating the Human Experience

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Program Officer
Northern Marianas Humanities Council

The Northern Marianas Humanities Council (Council) is inviting dynamic, motivated, and self-driven individuals with strong interest in the humanities to submit an employment application for the position of Program Officer.

The Program Officer is responsible for developing and implementing a variety of humanities programs and events and coordinating the Council's Community Grants program under the supervision of the Council's executive director. A detailed description of the Program Officer's duties may be obtained from the Council's office in Springs Plaza, Gualo Rai or from the Council's website at www.nmihumanities.org.

Applicants for this position must possess: (1). strong analytic, writing and communication skills; (2). knowledge of grants writing and grants administration; (3). the ability to work effectively with people from diverse backgrounds; (4). a working knowledge of NMI history and of current political, social and economic issues confronting the local community; (5). basic computer skills including knowledge of MS Excel, Word and PowerPoint; and (6). the ability to articulate the Council's mission to a wide range of audiences.

Applicants must have a bachelor's degree (B.A. or B.S.) in a humanities discipline from an accredited post-secondary institution. The salary range is from $35,000 to $40,000 depending on qualifications and experience. Benefits are set forth in the Council's Personnel Policy Manual.

Interested individuals are invited to send an application package including: (1). letter of interest; (2). detailed résumé; (3). a writing sample (500-800 words on a humanities topic of your choice); and (4). the names and addresses of three references to Scott Russell, Executive Director, Northern Marianas Humanities Council, Box 506407, Saipan, MP 96950. Complete application packages must be received by Council staff on or before 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 5, 2017. For more information about this employment opportunity please contact Council staff at 235-4785.

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No hits till 6th: Verlander, Tigers top Maeda, Dodgers 6-1

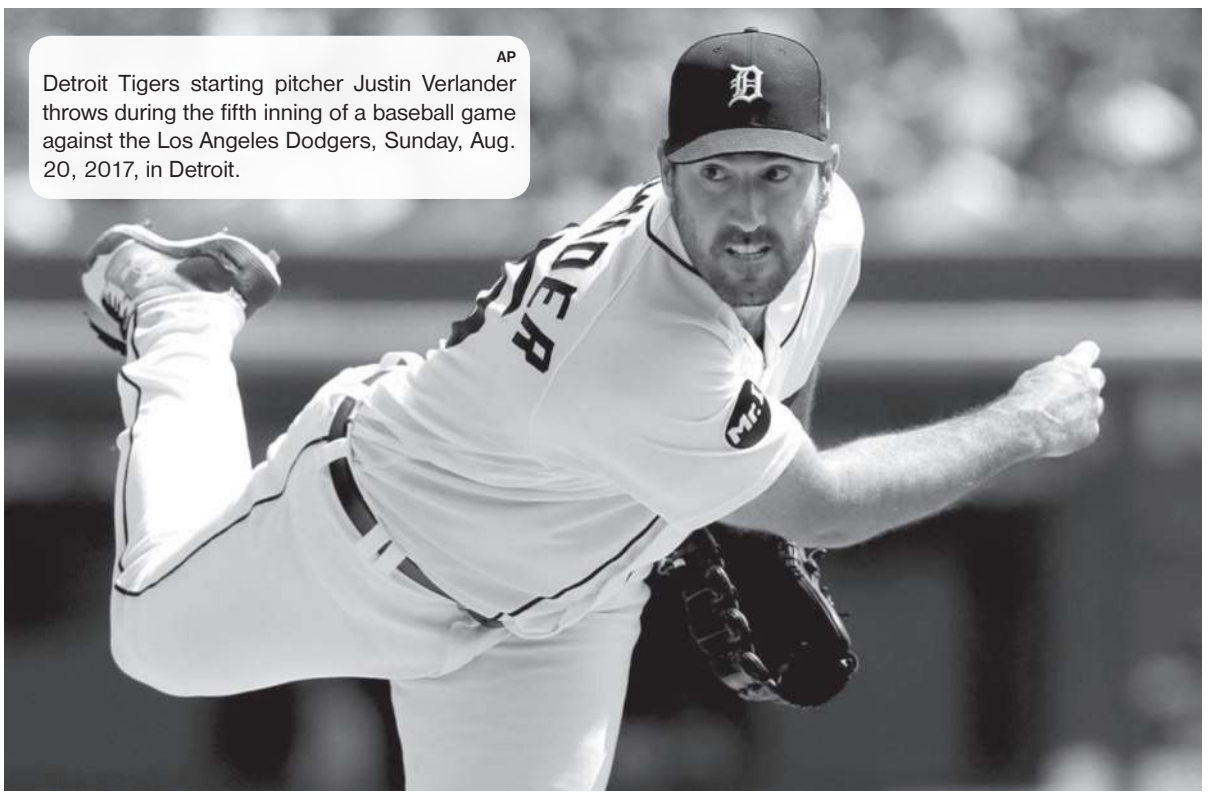
DETROIT (AP)—Justin Verlander and Kenta Maeda each took a no-hitter into the sixth inning, but only the Detroit star was able to keep his outstanding performance going as the Tigers beat the Los Angeles Dodgers 6-1 on Sunday.

Verlander (9-8) allowed a home run to Dodgers newcomer Curtis Granderson in the sixth. But shortly after his no-hit bid ended, the Tigers scored four times in the bottom of the inning against Maeda. The right-hander retired the first 15 Detroit batters before allowing five hits in the sixth.

The homer by Granderson was one of only two hits off Verlander. He walked one and struck out nine in eight innings.

Maeda (11-5) was pulled after the sixth and lost for the first time in seven starts.

Dixon Machado's two-run double put Detroit up 2-1. Justin Upton had a two-run homer and Miguel Cabrera hit a two-run double for the Tigers, who snapped a six-game skid. They halted a six-game winning streak by the Dodgers (87-35), who have the best record in the majors.



AP

Detroit Tigers starting pitcher Justin Verlander throws during the fifth inning of a baseball game against the Los Angeles Dodgers, Sunday, Aug. 20, 2017, in Detroit.

Pirates 6, Cardinals 3

In Williamsport, Pennsylvania, Josh Bell homered and drove in four runs to lead Pittsburgh over the St. Louis Cardinals in the Little League Classic.

The teams played at renovated Bowman Field, a minor league ballpark located 5 miles from where the Little League World Series is taking place. Sitting in the front rows were admiring Little Leaguers who got to mingle with the big league stars earlier in the day, part of a Major League Baseball initiative to celebrate youth baseball.

After the final out of MLB's first regular-season game in Williamsport, the Pirates shook hands on the field as usual following a victory. Then — in a nod to Little League baseball — both teams lined up at home plate and shook hands with each other, throwing in some hugs and high-fives to finish off a feel-good day.

Bell hit a two-run homer off Mike Leake (7-12) in the first inning and a two-run single in the third. Adam Frazier homered for the second straight game for the Pirates, who were the "home" team and won their second in a row to split the four-game series.

Ivan Nova (11-10) gave up three runs on eight hits in 5 2/3 innings. Felipe Rivero got three outs for his 14th save in 15 chances.

Jedd Gyorko hit a two-run homer for the Cardinals.

Marlins 6, Mets 4

In New York, Giancarlo Stanton hit his major league-leading 45th home run and Adam Conley struck out a career-high 11, leading Miami over New York.

Stanton connected for a three-run shot off Jacob deGrom (13-7) as the Marlins scored four times in the seventh inning for a 6-1 lead.

Conley (6-5) allowed one run and three hits in seven innings. Brad Ziegler pitched the ninth for his sixth save.

Yoenis Cespedes homered and hit an RBI double for the Mets, who have lost six of nine. They fell to 6-15 on Sundays this season, including 2-9 at Citi Field.

Rays 3, Mariners 0

In St. Petersburg, Florida, Blake Snell allowed only two hits in seven innings for his second consecutive win following a long drought, and Tampa Bay blanked Seattle.

Kevin Kiermaier hit a leadoff homer and Adeiny Hechavarria had a two-run shot for the Rays, who snapped a four-game skid and won for the first time in six tries against the Mariners this season.

Snell (2-6) ended a streak of 16 winless starts with a victory Tuesday at Toronto. This time, the left-hander retired 12 straight during one stretch. He gave up just a leadoff single to Nelson Cruz in the second inning and another single to Robinson Cano in the eighth.

Red Sox 5, Yankees 1

In Boston, Jackie Bradley Jr. tripled in two runs and singled home another, and Rick Porcello pitched six innings of a combined three-hitter to help AL East-leading Boston extend its margin over New York to five games.

The Red Sox won for the 14th time in 17 games, taking two of three from New York for the second weekend in a row. The archrivals meet again in the first week of September for a four-game series at Yankee Stadium.

Porcello (8-14) allowed all three New York hits and won his fourth straight start. Three relievers provided a perfect inning apiece.

Sonny Gray (7-8) gave up two runs in five innings and failed to strike out a batter for the first time in his career. He lost for the fourth time in five starts and fell to 1-6 in nine road starts this season.

Angels 5, Orioles 4

In Baltimore, inch-hitter Cameron Maybin singled home the tiebreaking run in the eighth inning, Kole Calhoun and Andrelton Simmons homered and the surging Los Angeles Angels beat Baltimore.

The Angels took advantage of nine walks to win the deciding matchup of a three-game series in which they hit 11 home runs. Los Angeles has won nine of 11 to move four games over .500 (64-60) for the first time since April 11.

Maybin missed the first two games of the series with a sore knee and was in a 5-for-27 funk since coming off the disabled list Aug. 7.

Cam Bedrosian (3-2) worked a hitless inning and Bud Norris got three outs for his 19th save.

Brad Brach (3-4) took the loss. Chris Davis homered for the Orioles, who have lost eight of 12.

Braves 8, Reds 1

In Atlanta, Tyler Flowers' grand slam broke open a close game in Atlanta's six-run fifth inning, Sean Newcomb earned his first home win and the Braves beat Cincinnati.

Newcomb (2-7) allowed five hits in five scoreless innings for his first victory since June 27 at San Diego. The rookie left-hander improved to 1-6 in eight starts at SunTrust Park.

The Braves led 2-0 before the big fifth against Reds reliever Drew Storen. Brandon Phillips and Freddie Freeman each had three hits for Atlanta.

The Reds were denied their first series sweep in Atlanta since 2009. Storen gave up six runs while getting only two outs.

Luis Castillo (2-6) gave up two runs in four innings. It was the shortest of the rookie's 12 starts with the Reds.

Royals 7, Indians 4

In Kansas City, Missouri, Cheslor Cuthbert homered and drove in three runs, Alcides Escobar also had three RBIs and Kansas City defeated Cleveland to avoid a three-game sweep.

Cam Gallagher also drove in a run for the Royals, who finally got their bats going after scoring just once in the first two games of the series. Kansas City piled up 12 hits and six runs off starter Danny Salazar (5-6), and finished with 15 hits for the day.

Jason Hammel (6-9) allowed three runs in six innings to win for the second time since June 19.

Francisco Lindor homered for the Indians, who finished 8-3 on their four-city road trip.

Twins 12, Diamondbacks 5

In Minneapolis, Eddie Rosario hit a grand slam in a nine-run first inning and Minnesota routed Arizona to complete a three-game sweep.

Bartolo Colon (5-10) allowed four runs over six innings for his third win in five decisions since being signed by the Twins. The 44-year-old righty became the 18th pitcher in major league history to defeat all 30 teams.

Arizona lefty T.J. McFarland, making his first start since July 2014, was chased after getting only one out and allowing run-scoring hits to Byron Buxton, Jorge Polanco, Max Kepler and Chris Gimenez. McFarland (4-5) was charged with seven earned runs, raising his ERA in August to 14.34.

Athletics 3, Astros 2

In Houston, Marcus Semien wound up with a Little League home run when Houston kept throwing the ball away, Jharel Cotton pitched well into the seventh inning and Oakland edged the Astros.

A day after the AL West-leading Astros turned six double plays, their defense quickly fell apart. Boog Powell led off the game with a single and Semien followed with a grounder in the hole that shortstop Alex Bregman threw into right field trying for a forceout at second base.

Semien, who was credited with an infield hit, never stopped running. The relay from right went to first baseman Marwin Gonzalez, and his throw to third skipped into left field, allowing Semien to score easily on the two errors.

The A's got their other run in the sixth on a passed ball by Juan Centeno.

Cubs 6, Blue Jays 5, 10 innings

In Chicago, Alex Avila capped Chicago's three-run 10th inning with a two-run single, and the Cubs rallied past Toronto for a three-game sweep.

With two outs and the bases loaded, Avila lined a base hit into right field against Roberto Osuna (3-4). Ben Zobrist scored easily and Javier Baez slid in safely just ahead of the throw from Jose Bautista.

The improbable rally by the Cubs also included two batters reaching on swing-and-miss strikeouts, and Kyle Schwarber scoring on a wild pitch.

The Blue Jays grabbed the lead with two runs in the top of the inning on Kevin Pillar's RBI single off Koji Uehara, and Norichika Aoki's bases-loaded loaded walk against Justin Wilson (4-4).

White Sox 3, Rangers 2

In Arlington, Texas, Miguel Gonzalez escaped early trouble and pitched six scoreless innings, leading Chicago over Texas.

The Rangers dropped 2½ games behind the Twins and Angels for the second AL wild card. They finished a 7-3 homestand, splitting the four-game series against the White Sox.

Gonzalez (7-10) pitched out of one-out, bases-loaded jams in both the second and third. After allowing singles to the first two batters in the fourth, he retired the last nine batters he faced.

Brewers 8, Rockies 4

In Denver, Jesus Aguilar homered twice, Chase Anderson won in his return from the disabled list and Milwaukee beat Colorado for its sixth victory in seven games.

Keon Broxton drove in two runs and Jonathan Villar added three hits as the Brewers remained two games behind first-place Chicago in the NL Central. They climbed within 2½ games of Arizona for the second NL wild card — and are just 3½ back of Colorado, which holds the league's top wild card.

Anderson (7-2) allowed one run and two hits in five effective innings. He threw 73 pitches in his first start since straining his left oblique on June 28.

Corey Knebel got his 26th save.

Nationals 4, Padres 1

In San Diego, Gio Gonzalez allowed five singles and struck out eight as he almost got through the seventh inning to pitch Washington past San Diego.

The NL East-leading Nationals won three of four against the Padres.

Gonzalez (12-5) settled in after giving up an unearned run in the first. Sean Doolittle struck out the side in the ninth for his 11th save.

Daniel Murphy drove in two runs for the Nationals.

Phillies 5, Giants 2

In San Francisco, rookie slugger Rhys Hoskins homered again and Pedro Florimon contributed with his bat and arm, sending Philadelphia over San Francisco.

Hoskins connected for a solo drive in the ninth inning, giving him five home runs in his first 11 major league games.

Florimon hit a two-run single off Hunter Strickland (2-3) to cap a three-run eighth that made it 4-2. Florimon also had an RBI double off starter Madison Bumgarner in the second, then made a sparkling defensive play in left field to throw out Buster Posey at the plate in the bottom of the inning.

Henrik Stenson closes with 64 to win at Wyndham

GREENSBORO, N.C. (AP)—Henrik Stenson kept making birdies on the back nine Sunday at the Wyndham Championship. They added up to a tournament record—and his first victory of the year.

Stenson closed with a 6-under 64 for a one-stroke victory in the final event of the PGA Tour regular season.

The 2013 FedEx Cup champion finished at 22-under 258 at Sedgefield Country Club, breaking the course's 72-hole record set by Carl Pettersson in 2008 and matched last year by Si Woo Kim.

The Swede earned $1,044,000 and 500 FedEx Cup points for his sixth win on tour and his first since the 2016 British Open.

"It's certainly a good time to start firing," Stenson said. "We know the kind of damage you can do in the playoffs. ... If you get hot and keep on playing well, you have a chance to challenge."

Stenson said he left his driver in his locker all week—"he's a little anxious to get out there and start getting some air time next week," he quipped of the club—and certainly didn't need it on the par-70 Sedgefield course.

For the second straight day, he had four birdies in a five-hole stretch of the back nine.

Ollie Schniederjans shot a 64 to finish second. Webb Simpson was 18 under after a 67."

"I had to keep on making birdies," Stenson said, "because Ollie was surely not backing down.

AP

Hendrik Stenson, of Sweden, reacts to making a birdie putt on the 17th hole during the final round of the Wyndham Championship golf tournament in Greensboro, N.C., Sunday, Aug. 20, 2017. Stenson won the tournament.

Stenson had three consecutive birdies on Nos. 15-17—leaving a 20-foot eagle putt on the 15th hole about a foot short—after he and Schniederjans were both at 19 under.

Stenson's 30-foot birdie putt on No. 17 moved him to 22 under.

He needed it, because Schniederjans kept the pressure on him. The 24-year-old former Georgia Tech player made a 40-foot birdie putt on No. 17 and added another birdie on the par-4 18th hole after placing his second shot 2 feet from the pin.

"I thought I had a two-shot cushion ... and as I walked over (to the 18th hole and) looked around, 'Oh, OK, (Schniederjans) birdied it as well," Stenson said. "So I better scramble a par here to get the win."

With Schniederjans watching the television broadcast and hoping for a tie, Stenson rolled a 35-foot birdie putt on No. 18 off the right edge of the cup, then made a 3-footer to end it.

"When I stuffed it (on No. 18), I thought that's probably going to be a playoff," Schniederjans said. "And he birdied 17 and got par on 18. Hat's off to him—he had a great finish, too. Just one short."

Low scores and tight leaderboards once again were the norm at Sedgefield. With seven holes left for the final pairing, four players—Stenson, Schniederjans, Ryan Armour and Kevin Na—shared the lead at 18 under.

"It was anyone's tournament on the back nine," Stenson said.

Stenson moved to 19 under with a birdie on the 13th and Schniederjans joined him with a remarkable recovery for birdie on the 15th. His second shot careened off a canopy covering the gallery and landed in a greenside bunker, but he chipped to 2 feet of the flagstick and converted the putt.

The other subplot at Sedgefield was the push by the bubble players to qualify for the playoffs that start next week at The Northern Trust for the top 125 on the points list.

Geoff Ogilvy, who was at No. 125, finished at 11 under and earned enough points to move to No. 116.

And Martin Flores, who started at No. 139, jumped to No. 118 and made the playoffs for the first time since 2014 after a 63 highlighted by a hole-in-one on the par-3 16th. J.J. Henry, Harold Varner III and Rory Sabbatini also played their way into the top 125.

"I was very aware of where I was all day but I knew that I needed to be somewhere inside the top 10, have to," Flores said. "So I was able to get off to a great start and I was able to just keep it going all day."

NBA investigating Lakers amid George tampering allegation

NEW YORK (AP)—The NBA is investigating whether the Los Angeles Lakers tampered with All-Star forward Paul George while he was under contract with the Indiana Pacers.

The Pacers asked the league to open the probe.

"The Lakers have been cooperative and, at this point, no findings have been made," NBA spokesman Mike Bass said Sunday in a statement. "We have asked both teams to refrain from commenting while the investigation is ongoing."

There is no known timetable for the completion of the investigation being conducted by the New York law firm of Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz.

George is a four-time All-Star and Los Angeles native who was traded to the Oklahoma City Thunder this offseason. The Pacers traded him after George told them he planned to leave Indiana as a free agent next summer.

"As the NBA's statement made clear, we cannot comment about the specifics of any ongoing investigation," Lakers spokeswoman Alison Bogli sai. "We can confirm, however, that we are cooperating fully with the NBA in the hope of clearing our name as soon as possible."

AP

In this Wednesday, July 12, 2017, file photo, Oklahoma City Thunder forward Paul George answers a question at his first news conference since Oklahoma City's blockbuster trade with the Indiana Pacers, in Oklahoma City.

There has been speculation for some time that George has wanted to join the Lakers. Under NBA rules, teams are not permitted to attempt to sway any player who is under contract with another team.

If the Lakers are found to have tampered, the NBA could issue any combination of fines, forfeiture of draft picks or suspensions of those who were deemed to be involved. Tampering, the league has said, can be either direct or indirect—and an interview that Lakers President Magic Johnson did earlier this year on ABC's "Jimmy Kimmel Live" did little to quell speculation about George's potential future in Los Angeles.

In that interview, Kimmel asked Johnson what constitutes tampering, and if he would be allowed to speak to George if they happened to cross paths.

"We're going to say hi because we know each other," Johnson said. "You just can't say, 'Hey, I want you come to the Lakers,' even though I'm going to be wink-winking. You know what that means, right?"

George will be a free agent in 2018.

He's coming off a season in which he averaged a career-best 23.7 points per game, and is joining a Thunder team that already has reigning NBA MVP Russell Westbrook.

"I've been wowed ever since we landed," George said last month after arriving in Oklahoma City. "I got a real welcoming, and this feels like home."

Greek federation accuses Bucks of staging player's absence

ATHENS, Greece (AP)—Greece's basketball federation has accused the Milwaukee Bucks and the NBA of hatching a plan to prevent All-Star forward Giannis Antetokounmpo from playing in the European championship.

The NBA denied the allegation.

The saga started Saturday about an hour after Antetokounmpo posted on Facebook and Instagram that he was unavailable because of a knee injury, with the Greek federation attacking the Bucks and the NBA in a statement, describing an "organized and well-staged plan" to keep Antetokounmpo from playing in the Eurobasket at the end of the month.

"The simultaneous report by the Milwaukee Bucks and Giannis Antetokounmpo himself, by phone and social media from faraway China, and not by the appropriate official manner, of his inability to join the national men's team saddens us ... but is not surprising," the federation said in the statement.

"A series of indications ... had convinced us of the existence of an organized and well-staged plan by (Antentokounmpo's NBA) team, with the full knowledge if not encouragement of the NBA that put the athlete on the spot and forced him to announce today that he is no longer part of the men's national team."

However, the NBA countered Saturday night with a statement saying Antetokounmpo is indeed hurt.

"The NBA and the Milwaukee Bucks have followed all appropriate protocol under the NBA-FIBA agreement," the NBA said in a statement released to The Associated Press. "Giannis has an injury that has been confirmed through multiple examinations and any suggestion to the contrary is false."

The Greek federation said more details would soon become known. Takis Tsagronis, the federation general secretary, told state TV ERT that a scan revealed no problems with Antetokounmpo's knee.

"We, on our side, did everything not to give the Bucks an excuse," Tsagronis said. "We took a magnetic scan of Giannis' leg and it was clean. What the Bucks claim is not the reality; something else is happening."

6 division contests in 3x3 Hoopfest

Mariana Islands Basketball Federation will have six categories in its inaugural 3x3 Hoopfest that will be held next month.

In the men's division, interested teams can enter in the U16, U19, and open division, while the women's contest has the same groups. Each squad is allowed to have a maximum of four players and registration is only $50 per team.

The first leg of the MIBF 3x3 Hoopfest will run from Sept. 5 to 9 at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium, while from Sept. 30 to Oct. 4, games will be moved to the Civic Center Basketball Court in Susupe. MIBF will only accept the first 12 teams (in each division) to register and turn in the entrance fees.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

A Rollers player, left, dribbles in front of the Mt. Carmel School defender during a game in a youth league at the Gilbert C. Gymnasium, which will be the venue of the first leg of the MIBF 3x3 Hoopfest.

Though the 3x3 tournament has six divisions, only teams that will compete in the men's open field will have a chance to represent the CNMI to the 2017 Pacific Mini Games in Vanuatu in December.

For more information about the 3x3 event, contact MIB officials Preston Basa at 989-2516 and Elias Rangamar at 287-6347 or NMSA staff Greg Iginoef 234-6672.

Meanwhile, the chefs de mission in the Mini Games that will run from Dec. 4 to 15 held a two-day meeting last weekend in Port Vila.

Representatives from Wallis and Futuna, Cook Islands, New Caledonia, Fiji, Samoa, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Solomon Islands, Niue, Nauru, Tuvalu, Kiribati and the host country were updated on the catering, Athletes Villages, transportation, medical, security, venues, and the events for the competition. Chefs de mission of countries who did not make it to Vanuatu joined the group's conference online. The officials in Vanuatu also visited the various facilities for the Mini Games and were impressed that most of them are in one big area or close to each other. ***(Roselyn B. Monroyo)***

2 teams try to overtake Darrty

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Sister squads 6JMS Dragon Masters and 101 Proofers are trying to catch up and hopefully snatch the A Division title away from the Naked Fish Ridin'Darrty in the Saipan Electronic Darts Association Bud Light League 2017.

The Ridin'Darrty is currently on top of the eight-team field in the A Division with a 193-113 record and the Dragon Masters (171-135) and Proofers (170-136) are not far behind. They play every Monday and last night's results were not yet available at press time.

Mafia 1, another 6JMS-sponsored team, is in fourth with a 168-138 slate and could still pull off a surprise and finish in the Top 3 if the other squads become complacent. They need to win more games and hopefully the leaders lose their matches.

And with two weeks left in the league, after yesterday's matches, every win in the 17 games they play are important for the three teams if they hope to take the crown away from Darrty's hands.

The 9 Eleven Mechanik's (151-155), 6JMS Predators (132-174), Franken Drunken Warriors (129-177), and Franken Gunners (110-196) complete the standings in the said division.

Darrty is still in the lead after manhandling the Predators, 12-5, while the Dragon Masters squeezed out a 9-8 win over the 101 Proofers. The Warriors defeated the Gunners, 11-6, and the Mechanik's nipped Mafia, 9-8, in the other games.

The Flame Tree B Thursday Division has three weeks left with the Joony's Serial Killaz holding on to an 11-game edge (179-91) over the Chow Time Drillers (168-102) followed by the Naked Fish Ridin'Darrty B (154-116) and Jonny's S.O.L. (152-118).

The Naked Fish Na'Gupu (130-140), Jonny's Real Deal (128-142), Naked Fish Dartaholiks (92-178), and the Naked Fish DNA Jump It (17-193) are the other teams in the Flame Tree B division.

Other results last week are as follows:

Masters
- Pythons 13, Calamity 4
- Nakayoshi 11, Mafia 6

Ladies
- Exquisites 11, Hot Mess 4
- Momshies 10, Bull0It II 5

Tuesday B
- Strikers 12, Warriors 3
- Xecutioners 11, LOL 4
- Lupeyt Boyz 10, Chamberos 5

Chichirika C
- Knights 14, Bull-It 1
- Beach Flukers 9, Hut Shot 6
- Bull Hitters 9, Scorpions 6

Kingfisher C
- Parakeyu! 11, Re-Darts 4
- Dart Vaders 10, Sunsports 5
- Ridin'Darrty C 8, Hit'em Up 7

Fanihi B
- D'Strikers 8, Dart Crafters 7
- Mafia II 8, Shaka 7

Flame Tree B
- Serial Killaz 12, Real Deal 3
- Na'Gupu 11, DNA Jump It 4
- Drillers 9, Ridi'Darrty B 6

PAIRE

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Football Club) and website www.PaireFootballClub.org. Paire also has a U17 team and Chambers said the squad is likely to practice at the Hopwood Middle School. Students from other villages are also welcome to stop by and watch the club's training sessions.

"Last season, Paire had under 100 players on our youth rosters combined. We have co-ed teams in U6, U8, U10, U12 division B, and U12 division A, and boys U14 and U17 and girls U15. We have one coach for each team. Paire's strength is in youth development. Paire emphasizes equal playing time in the games for all players in the U6 to U12 age groups. We want all the kids to have fun," Chambers said.

For more information or to register, send email to PaireFC@gmail.com or text 483-1732 (1PFC).

For Shirley's FC, players registration form can be picked up at Shirley's Coffee Shop in Susupe and Garapan. Each filled-out registration forms should be accompanied with a copy of the player's birth certificate or passport.

Players who will become members of the club or are interested to know more about Shirley's FC could check the group's training sessions at the Oleai Elementary School Field. Since the Oleai pitch is home to Shirley's FC, its students, along with those residing in San Jose, Chalan Kiya, and other nearby villages are encouraged to join the club.

"Schedule of practices and other club updates will be posted on our Facebook page fb.com/ShirleysFC," club general secretary Noelle Macario said.

Macario added that so far they have around 50 players spread in the co-ed U6, U8, U10, and U12, boys U14, and girls U15 age groups. The different teams are handled by five coaches and five assistants, who will undergo a workshop on Aug. 26 and Sept. 2 in preparation for the fall youth league.

CNMI

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continued in the boys Doubles 1, as North Pacific moved on top after Ren and Song slipped past Tuvalu's Gavin Moliti and Vanuatu's Samuel Strid, 4-1, 1-4, 12-10. West Pacific then forced the third deadlock when Mainguy and Fiji's Shantanu Shail prevailed against Vincent Tudela and the Federated States of Micronesia's Joab Williams in another super tiebreaker three-set tiff, 4-2, 2-4, 10-8.

In the girls division, Lee teamed up with fellow CNMI player Malika Miyawaki and lifted North Pacific to a 4-3 advantage after a 4-1, 4-1 win in the Doubles 1 versus Breen and Vanuatu's Desiree Signo. However, West Pacific ended up tying the matchup after the Vanuatu tandem of Molballeh and Daisy Spiti downed Guam's Anika Sachdev and Joycelyn Tenai in Doubles 2, 4-0, 4-0.

In other results, FSM's Jones George was the lone player to make it to the win column in the North Pacific's loss to East in the U12 age group.

George played in the first game and outclassed Tahiti's Arlitea Cotti in the Singles 1, 4-2, 5-3. East Pacific swept the seven remaining matches to kick off it campaign in the team event of the division on high gear.

The CNMI's Daniel Kang suited up for the North Pacific in the Singles 2 and bowed to the Cook Islands' Maka Maui, 1-4, 0-4. Another Commonwealth player, Hye Jin Elliot, also played in the singles (2) and fell to Maui's compatriot Moana Une, 3-5, 0-4. Elliot was entered in the doubles contest, too along with FSM's Leilah Etscheit and they lost to Tahiti's Vaiani Dussere-Valleau and Samoa's Mahina Warren, 3-5, 0-4. Palau and Guam netters played in the other games for North Pacific and also faltered against Samoa, Tahiti, and Cook Islands bets.

In the U14, East Pacific triumphed, too versus West, 5-3. East Pacific won three of the last four matches in the pairing for the close victory.

Meanwhile, games in the team event will continue today with the North Pacific's U14 squad having its first assignment in the round-robin competition against West Pacific. The CNMI's Seung Jin Paik, Jimin Woo, Sean Lee, siblings Coume and Conatsu Kaga, and Maria Gregoire will banner North Pacific.

North's U16 crew will also play in Day 2 and will challenge East Pacific for its final assignment. North Pacific must post a convincing win against East to boost its title bid in the division. Also scheduled in Day 2 is the West and East collision in the U12 age group.

CRUZ

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decision against Arkansas to earn the first finals berth, while Nebraska defeated North Carolina, 3-1, to advance to the title game.

Nevada was humbled by Nebraska, 9-1, in their opening game while beating Massachusetts, 1-0, next and closed out the pool play with a 0-1 loss to Michigan.

Cruz, in an email to the *Saipan Tribune*, said he used to play in the Saipan Little League since he was 11 years old. "I started playing for the Comets and made it to the Saipan All Star team twice."

"I've been playing baseball since I was 11 because all my brothers and Dad played the sport. I continued playing baseball while in high school when I moved to Henderson City in Nevada," added Cruz.

He played for the Basic Academy of International Studies Wolves and the Southern Nevada Blue Sox, which has won the state championship twice before clinching the ALWS national title last week.

Cruz is set to continue his baseball career with the Pima Community College Aztecs in Tucson, Arizona, which plays in the Arizona Community College Athletic Conference in Region I of the National Junior College Athletic Association.

He said that his main goal is to make it to the Major League and become a professional baseball player. "I enjoy the sport very much and with the love and support from family I know I can do it."

"This one is for my Dad [the late Estevan R. Cruz Sr.]. I know he is always by my side and guiding me through the sport that we both love."

Cruz and the entire team were also awarded with the Key to the City by Henderson City Mayor Debra March when they were recognized last week.

Joan Kiyoshi, who acts as Cruz's guardian, said that his cousin loves playing baseball and that even when he's hurting he won't mention it. "He never misses a practice because if he does he can't play and he hates not playing."

"His coach believes he is a tremendous player and could one day make it to the MLB. My family and I are here to support him in his career and hope that he makes his dreams come true."

Kiyoshi added that their entire family wishes Cruz the best of luck when he begins the next step of his baseball career in Arizona.

Grace Saures, another cousin of Cruz, said he and his brothers grew up playing baseball with their dad and loved every game played by his sons. "He [Estevan] is now watching from above and is probably proud of [Erik]."

"My family in Henderson has been supporting Erik and his dream of one day playing in the MLB. It has not been easy but we're working together to find solutions and make sure he makes it to every game played in different states," added Saures.

She said that their family is not rich. "But with the love and support, we can make it happen. He has even pulled weeds, cleaned backyards, and trimmed trees to have enough money for baseball trips to California, Arizona, Colorado, and Utah."

"He worked hard to be where he is at and I cannot be more proud of him. We love you Erik and we want him to just keep reaching for the stars."

Justo Cruz, Erik's uncle, has also looked out after his nephew. "Your dad died when you were still young and I told him that I would look after you guys and I have been. I am very proud of you and all your achievements."

End of Summer Coed 4-Person Beach Volleyball Tournament

PHOTOS By JON PEREZ

John Costales, left, of Sam Da Soo sets up the ball in their game against Resting Beach Face in last Saturday's End of Summer Coed 4-Person Beach Volleyball Tournament at the Sandy Beach.

Team Hitfaced celebrates their second place finish after losing to Handicapped in the finals.

Jason Limes of Hitfaced prepared to serve.

Ryan Camacho of Resting Beach Face stops the ball in their elimination round game against Sam Da Soo.

The one-day tournament attracted players of all skill levels with more than 20 persons spread out in five different teams.

Jessie Palacios of Handicapped, right, blocks the spike of John Nekaifes of Hitfaced.

Resting Beach Face's Alfredo Guevarra, right, successfully penetrates the defense of Bryan Valenton of Handicapped.

Resting Beach Face and Handicapped in action in the semifinals with the winner advancing to meet Hitfaced in the finals.

No hits till 6th: Verlander, Tigers top Maeda, Dodgers 6-1

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Henrik Stenson closes with 64 to win at Wyndham

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CNMI players stand ground

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

North Pacific leaned on CNMI players to tie West Pacific, 4-4, during the rain-delayed opening of the 2017 Pacific Oceania Junior Championships Team Event yesterday in Fiji.

Carol Lee handed North Pacific a pair of wins, while the two other victories came from Ken Song and Michael Ren and Guam's Camden Camacho.

The North-West showdown in the U16 age group started with the boys Singles 1 game between Robbie Schorr and Vanuatu's Clement Mainguy, who drew first blood after a 4-1, 4-1 triumph over the Commonwealth player. Up next was the boys Singles 2 event and Camacho evened up the count following a 5-3, 4-0 victory against Vanuatu's Marlin Hannam.

For the third match, Lee gave North Pacific the lead when she dominated Fiji's Saoirse Breen in the Singles 1, 5-0, 4-1. However, West Pacific tied the duel anew, thanks to the 4-2, 4-0 win of Vanuatu's Rosalie Molballeh against Grace Choi.

The neck-and-neck battle

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Malika Miyawaki, seen here competing in a local tournament, teamed up with Carol Lee in giving North Pacific a victory against West Pacific in the Doubles 2 event of the 2017 Pacific Oceania Junior Championships Team Event yesterday in Fiji.

Cruz part of World Series champs

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Erik Cruz holds the American Legion World Series championship trophy after their game against Nebraska in the finals last week in Shelby, North Carolina.

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Erik Cruz, a former Saipan Little League standout, has been making waves in the youth baseball scene in Nevada and was even a member of the Nevada Henderson Post 40 champion squad in the recently concluded American Legion World Series.

Henderson City defeated Nebraska Omaha Post, 2-1, in the finals last Aug. 15 in Shelby, North Carolina despite the squad finishing second to their opponents after only winning one game in the three matches they played in pool play.

Henderson joined Nebraska, Massachusetts, and Michigan in the Stripes bracket, while Arkansas, North Carolina, Idaho, and New Jersey are the teams in the Stars group.

Nevada, Massachusetts, and Michigan ended up tied with similar 1-2 slates in the group stage, but the former earned the semis berth based on the tiebreak. Nevada then faced Arkansas as the top seed in their group with North Carolina in second place.

Nevada hacked out a 7-3

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Paire, Shirley's prep up for Fall season

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Paire Football Club has added a venue for its training sessions to reach out to Kagman residents, while Shirley's Football Club is also busy getting ready for the 2017 NMIFA Youth Fall League.

Paire official Derek Chambers said the group's boys U14 and girls U15 teams will be practicing at the Chacha Oceanview Middle School this season.

"Middle school kids residing in Kagman and interested in playing soccer may join Paire FC," Chambers said.

For elementary school children or those in the five to 12 age group, Paire hopes to see Dandan San Vicente, and Papago residents register with the club and play in the fall season of the Northern Mariana Islands Football Association-organized league that will start on Sept. 16. To get a better idea about Paire FC and its teams, interested residents in the villages mentioned above can check the group's training sessions from 5pm to 6pm at the Dandan Middle School Field. Training days for specific age groups (from U6 to U12) at the Dandan pitch will be posted at the club's Facebook page (Paire

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Paire Football Club's new recruits last year pose for a photo before training at the Hopwood Middle School Field. The club is getting ready for the fall league that will start next month.